



## *Fall Newsletter*

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

**October 2005**

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

### **Oprah- National Spokesperson for A Better Chance**



"Education is freedom. Through A Better Chance, we have the opportunity to contribute to a life that is free to make better choices and be the most productive for our society."

**- Oprah**

Since 1997 Oprah Winfrey has served as National Spokesperson for A Better Chance. How has her visibility helped the program? According to Judith Berry Griffin, former president of A Better Chance, "There are really two gifts that Oprah has given us that are very meaningful. First, her own time, interest and attention have really been extraordinary. The other is the positive influence that she's exerted.... We believe that the 10,000 people who've been involved in A Better Chance are going to grow up to be leaders in their communities. Oprah is a person who carries our name, and she sets a wonderful example of helping others. And our kids will follow that example, because they watched her do it. I think that is an amazing gift.... She has given us the gift of time to think about the program and to breathe. She has given us notoriety and good publicity.... The word angel is overused, but it certainly is a true designation in this particular instance.

### **A Better Chance - One of 100 Best Charities in America**

A Better Chance, the national resource for identifying, recruiting, and developing leaders among academically gifted students of color, has been named one of the nation's top 100 charities by Worth magazine. According to Worth, there are more than 800,000 public charities in the U.S.

Worth is a comprehensive personal wealth management magazine, with articles on wealth management and preservation, private equity investment, inheritance and wealth transference issues, philanthropy, and personal passions.

"A Better Chance has been making a difference, one student at a time," said Judith Berry Griffin, former president of A Better Chance. "We commend Worth for conducting an exhaustive search and acknowledging our efforts and those of all the great organizations on its list."

## RBC Scholars and Soccer - A Match

This year in the RBC House there are three soccer players: Ranferi Cruz, Jonathan Orquiz, and me, William Orquiz.

Jonathan began the year playing junior varsity with Ranferi. However, Jonathan has done so well and has improved so much that in the middle of the season, he was moved to varsity, starting in two games to date.

The varsity team standings, with sections games coming up soon, are 6-7-3. It would be great to go to state, but if not, there is always next year. Next year Ranferi will also play varsity, making three RBC boys on the varsity soccer team.

I have had a good year. I have scored a total of four goals, making me the top scorer on my team for almost half the season.

*William Orquiz*

## Welcome, John



New to the RBC House this year is John Buycks, a fourteen-year-old from Dayton, Ohio. Back in Dayton, John lived with his mom Toni; he has no siblings.

The middle school John attended is the Omega School of Excellence, which we both attended for the last four years. Throughout most of our middle-school years, we have been friends, and I have learned much about him. John's favorite subject in school is math. He is very outgoing and makes friends easily.

John's favorite sport is football. He plays on the freshman football team at John Marshall High School; so far, his team is undefeated. It is John's goal to play college football for the University of Miami.

*Demetrius Champen*

## Welcome, Demetrius



A new addition to the RBC family is Demetrius Champen. Demetrius, or "De" is fifteen years old and a freshman at John Marshall High School. His favorite subjects in school are math and science. He plans to play basketball this year.

Demetrius attended the Omega School of Excellence in Dayton, Ohio for four years, fifth through eighth grades.

He really enjoys Rochester - going to the mall, attending sports events, and joking around the RBC House.

*John Buycks*

## Help for Hurricane Victims

A Better Chance has encouraged member schools to adopt and place victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Member schools have committed more than 100 places to Gulf Coast students in need. According to Sandra E. Timmons, president of A Better Chance, "the stability and support these schools provide can go a long way toward giving these young people, who have been through so much, a chance to rebuild their lives and take new steps toward a brighter future.

Feeder organizations in Houston, Dallas, and Atlanta are working to identify displaced students with academic promise.

The Rochester Board of Directors has directed its selection committee to pursue the addition of one of these displaced students to our current scholars. At the time of press, no student had yet been identified, nor had the necessary funding (approximately \$7,000) been secured.

## New Year - New Officers

For the second successive year, the RBC Board of Directors, resident directors, and host families met at the home of Roger Dearth in July to plan the upcoming year. The annual planning meeting also involved the election of new officers: Roger Dearth, President; Mary Place, Secretary; and Alan Baltzer, Treasurer.

One of the goals set for this year was to expand the Board of Directors. Anyone interested in serving on the board should contact Roger Dearth: phone (507) 284-9906; fax (507) 284-9927; email [dearth.roger@mayo.edu](mailto:dearth.roger@mayo.edu).

## Thank You and Farewell

The RBC Board of Directors extends its sincere thanks to two couples who have given much to RBC. Charles and Jamila Petite and Rob and Tonya Holt have been transferred with IBM and have left Rochester.

Both couples served as host families for RBC scholars and on the Board of Directors. Charles and Jamila were co-chairpersons of last spring's fundraising silent auction and banquet; Rob and Tonya and the Petites assisted with our major fundraiser.

Best wishes to the Petites and Holts in their new endeavors.

## Designate RBC in your United Way Pledge

At this time of the year, many of you are considering your 2006 giving through the United Way Campaign at your place of employment. By giving through the United Way, you help many agencies in your community. When filling out your United Way pledge card, consider specifying Rochester Better Chance (RBC) by using the Optional Designation category and specifying the Rochester Better Chance Foundation, 727 2nd Street, SW, Rochester, MN 55902, for some or all of your pledge. By designating RBC on your pledge card, you help us all year long. Thank you for supporting the United Way and RBC!

## President's Corner

### Roger Dearth, RBC President

Volunteerism has always been the hallmark of RBC's success, but no group of volunteers contributes more than our Mayo Medical School tutors. I would like to recognize them for their selfless dedication to the RBC scholars despite the tremendous demands on their time. Second year student Molly Martyn has assembled one of the largest and most active groups in the history of the program. There are three to four tutors at the RBC house each school night including two husband and wife teams. While their impact is easily evidenced in the academic success of the RBC scholars, they serve an even more important role - that of role model. Not only do they inspire some scholars towards careers in medicine, they also demonstrate that world class graduate education in any field is an achievable goal for anybody willing to take advantage of their "better chance". Please join me in saluting Molly and the entire tutoring team!

- Brian Braithwaite
- Ashlee Byrd
- Yemi Durosaro
- Rayna Dyck
- Diana Frey
- Ellie Jelsing
- Justin Juskewitch
- Hena Khaja
- Andrew and Jen Landstrom
- Stan Liu
- Molly Martyn
- Tony McHerron
- Stephen Mihalcik
- Anand Patel
- Rod Rahimi
- Brandon and Kristen Yuan

## Riding a Hurricane Called Rita...

### Memories from a Red Cross Volunteer - Sonia D. Winslett, M.D.

I was so restless. After hearing about the effects of Hurricane Katrina and realizing that I am a board certified Emergency Physician, it was difficult to sit in the office and do computer work. Sure the computer work is important; however, I felt I should be doing something else to help. I had contacted various organizations, including the volunteer Mayo team where I work, but they had too many volunteers. On Tuesday, September 6th, 2005, I called the Rochester Red Cross office and asked if I could continue classes I had started many years prior. I felt that at least I could be trained and ready to help if there were future events requiring volunteers. They were having classes that Friday and Saturday, so I cleared my schedule and attended. By Saturday afternoon, they asked if I could be available right away and by Tuesday, September 13th I was deployed to Baton Rouge.

Now I understand shelter life. My first two nights were in a staff shelter, which was a gym next to a neighborhood park. There was one sink in the women's two stall toilet and no shower. I killed a couple of large roaches fully realizing that others were probably lurking in shadows, waiting until dark. Thank God there were air mattresses so we did not have to sleep on the floor. The next few nights I slept in a wonderful staff shelter at a church. It seemed like the Hilton. There were mobile showers in the parking lot and sometimes the congregation would provide meals. However, as it was for our fellow citizens who had been displaced, there was no privacy and theft was a constant concern.

My assignment was to be one of the doctors caring for the Red Cross volunteers; we have to be sure they also receive medical attention. The Baton Rouge Red Cross headquarter office was in an empty Wal-Mart and, ironically, our Staff Health Services office was in

the empty pharmacy location; very appropriate. Our team of nurses and doctors traveled throughout Louisiana to assess Red Cross volunteers, make rounds to visit volunteers who had been hospitalized, and accompanied volunteers who needed to go to a clinic or emergency department.

Then news about a second Hurricane called Rita was released so on September 23rd, a nurse and I were reassigned to a new client (evacuee) shelter in DeRidder, Louisiana (near the Texas border) to provide health care for staff and clients evacuated from the Lake Charles area. We drove through the wind and rain, arrived at the junior high almost 300 people in the gym who had arrived the night before. A phenomenal client (evacuee) who had also arrived the night before was also a nurse and had set up a small first aid station at an exit door so she could help her fellow evacuees. The plan was that if a flood occurred in the gym, the men would go to the top of the bleachers and the women and children would go onto the stage. The nurses and I set up a first aid station on the stage. Other volunteers cleaned an old cabinet we used for supplies and we used a desk as a place on which to work. Some of the children made us a beautiful Red Cross First Aid sign in whatever color crayons we could find and the nurse who was an evacuee continued to work with our team.

Then Rita hit. She banged against the walls but, thank God, the gym had no windows. We lost electricity, which also meant no lights or air conditioning. It was about 90 degrees indoors. Many people, including volunteers, had no cots or mattresses and during the few times I slept, I slept on my mat behind the desk on the stage so people could find me if they needed me. Ice to cool medications was sparse and people started getting dehydrated. I was thankful I had listened to that "still small voice" and packed some powered Gatorade®. We made cool, diluted Gatorade® and Pedialyte® rounds for the elderly and the children; no one was going to die during our duty. The nearest hospital was so overcrowded that a person had to be very sick to be transported by the ambulance. Unfortunately, two elderly people incurred what appeared to be heat stroke, but both lived and made it to the hospital. One two year old girl lost her thirst drive and refused to drink. I sat

with her and her mom outside and dropped drips of Gatorade on her lips. She eventually started licking her lips and then twice grabbed her cup and drank from it. She made it to the hospital and looked better when she returned. I still thank God for her health.

The shelter was evacuated on Tuesday morning, September 27th at about 1:00am. The guardsmen stayed and watched over us while we slept after the evacuees left. I regret I will never be able to thank these nameless men again, some of whom were being deployed overseas soon thereafter.

The nurse and I returned to Baton Rouge that Tuesday afternoon to the hugs of our supervisor who was very concerned about us. He had not realized he was sending us into the path of the hurricane, nor could he reach us for about four days due to the hurricane. The nurse and I were given new assignments and said good-bye. The rest of my assignment in Louisiana allowed me to visit small shelters west of Baton Rouge, a large thousand-client shelter at a civic center in Baton Rouge and a distribution center on a strip of land south of New Orleans called Grand Isle.

Volunteers are wonderful; they endure hardships for no pay and often for no thanks. They leave their homes to live and work in horrible conditions, yet often still say they do not feel they do enough to help. I miss the work I performed in Louisiana and my fellow comrades. I miss the hope in the faces of our fellow citizens who had been displaced yet refused to give up and remained faithful. I thank God for reminding me again just how blessed we are, for reminding me what is really important in life is our relationship with Him, family and friends and for reminding me to not sweat the small stuff.

## Upcoming Events

- October 12 .....RBC Board Meeting,  
7:00 pm at the RBC house
- November 9 .....RBC Board Meeting,  
7:00 pm at the RBC house
- November 23 - 25 .....Thanksgiving Break
- December 7 .....RBC Board Meeting,  
7:00 pm at the RBC house
- December 16 .....RBC Holiday Open House,  
5:30 - 8:00pm
- December 22 - January 2 .....Winter Break
- January 11 .....RBC Board Meeting,  
7:00 pm at the RBC house

## 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 estate planning. RBC is a supporting member of Greater Rochester Area Leave a Legacy Foundation. It's an excellent way to leave your legacy with the program. Consult your estate planner/lawyer for the best method for using this option.

**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.

## RBC Board Members

*Roger Dearth*, President, Mayo Clinic  
*Renotta Young*, Past President, IBM  
*Mary Place*, Secretary, retired John Marshall English Teacher  
*Alan Baltzer*, Treasurer, McGladrey & Pullen, LLP  
*Frank Abunge*, Marriott Hotel  
*Cindy Cox*, John Marshall High School  
*Henry Hocraffer*, IBM  
*Rosemary Kuzma*, Mayo Clinic  
*Sonia Winslett*, M.D., Mayo Foundation  
*Nate P. Birkholz*, Advisory Member, Wendlund Utz Stahl & Mintz LTD



## Resident Directors

Robin & Scott Gwaltney

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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**  
200 First Street SW  
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