



Fall 2009

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“A Better Chance . . . For A Better Future”

October 2009

Introducing RBC’s newest scholars

In August and September, four new scholars arrived at the Rochester A Better Chance home in Rochester. We’re pleased to introduce Dontorrie, Wesley, Jorge and Eric - all freshmen at John Marshall High School.



Dontorrie Chatman

My name is Dontorrie Chatman and I’m from Chicago. I am 14 years old and I graduated from KIPP Ascend School in Chicago. I am excited to be a Better Chance scholar and to be attending John Marshall High

School. I love playing video games and traveling to spend time with family across the United States.



Wesley Cammon

I’m Wesley and I am from Chicago, Illinois. I graduated from KIPP Ascend School in Chicago. In my freetime I like to play sports like football, basketball, and anything else. I

also like to draw, because my uncle inspired me to. My favorite subject in school is biology because of the experiments and participation. I like my new home and school a lot. Tom and Denise are great people. P.S. Hi Mom and family!



Jorge Luis Lopez

My name is Jorge Luis Lopez and I am from Compton, California. Compton forms the background to many descriptions of my life. I’ve been raised in a one-bedroom

apartment along with my siblings. There have been many tough moments in my life, whether it has been an economic problem or a family issue. I have never been ashamed to say that I can’t afford a pair of shoes and especially to say that I come from Compton, because these are the factors that have made me strong and taught me to appreciate everything I have. In Compton nobody cared about my goals or accomplishments, but that never got my morale down. Now I have a great triumph just by being here at Rochester Better Chance. For this is just the beginning of everything and the key to the door of success in my life. In my four years here I will make the best of the opportunity.



Eric Walker

My name is Eric Walker and I’m from Orange County, California. I like to break dance and hang out with friends. I’ve been playing the flute since the fourth grade and I used to play piano.

I’d like to learn to play other instruments in the future. I’m currently taking Chinese as a foreign language which I thought would be cool.

Our new look on the Web



for sharing there expertise in building our new Web site! Look for more changes to come in the near future.

RBC has a new look on the Web. Visit www.rochesterbetterchance.org to see what’s new. Our thanks to Dawn Daehn, 2d Web Design, and John Schultz, John Schultz Design,

President's Corner



Eric Funk
RBC President

It's a new school year, which brings a lot of exciting times for the program. In future letters I will discuss the work that will be done to maintain this wonderful organization. In this letter I want to take a step back and tell you about the work that was done over the last year. Much of the credit goes to the focus and leadership of our past president, Jackie Olson. And, a lot of hard work was done by the board, many of whom Jackie recruited. The RBC board has some of the brightest and hardest working people I know. I am proud to be working side by side with this group.

In case you haven't heard, Robin and Scott Gwaltney moved on after many wonderful years with the program. The choice of new resident directors was key to the foundation of the program's future. We are excited about what Tom and Denise Moody, our new resident directors, will do for the program.

After this foundation was created, we began our search for four new scholars. This year was different because all of our past scholars graduated, leaving the house empty. We found the scholar selection process to be very competitive. So many candidates had wonderful backgrounds and similar stories. This process reenergized the reason I support the RBC program. Our focus will now be on helping our selected scholars graduate and have successful and productive lives.

We also had to make sure we had a house that was safe, comfortable and updated, with an eye to reducing expenses. Many people gave to this cause and we have seen some significant updates. New windows have been installed. This will help our heating expenses immensely. Painting the walls and maintenance of the older woodwork was done to help bring out the warmth of the older house. Many other minor updates were done for safety and comfort. The most recent project was repair of the roof, as there was a leak that caused some damage on the third floor. At this point, the roof has been fixed, but the third floor is in need of some help. We have a plan to achieve this, and I will update you in coming newsletters.

The board is looking into new and exciting ways to communicate with the community about what is going on with RBC and how the community can help. Look for these to come soon.

It was an exciting 2008-2009 school year as the program made some significant changes in preparation for its future. This coming year will be a year of focus on the long term vision of the program and, of course, a major emphasis will be on helping the four new scholars get a better chance with the support of all who make the RBC program a reality.

Thank you for your continued support.

Eric Funk
RBC President

RBC Calendar

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 14 | RBC Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Rochester A Better Chance house |
| November 11 | RBC Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Rochester A Better Chance house |
| December 9 | RBC Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Rochester A Better Chance house |
| January 13 | RBC Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
Rochester A Better Chance house |
| March 5 | SAVE THE DATE!
Rochester A Better Chance Gala |

RBC Golf Tournament Recap



On Friday, September 25, Rochester A Better Chance hosted its Second Annual Rochester A Better Chance Best Ball Golf Tournament at Eastwood Golf Course.

The event raised nearly \$1,500 to support RBC.

It was a perfect Fall day with sunshine and temps in the 80s. More than 60 golfers participated in a fun-filled day with field contests and an excellent dinner to round out the evening.

Thanks to all who participated and to Eastwood Golf Course for hosting the event.

A message from Tom and Denise Moody, RBC resident directors

The saying “change is the only constant” certainly describes our life over the last 12 months. It was a year ago that we were offered and accepted the position as resident directors but were unable at that time to fathom how different our lives would become. Similar to expecting the birth of a child, we knew our lives were going to be turned upside down, but it was hard to picture how being responsible for the care of the RBC scholars would affect our daily life. But as these past 12 months passed both quickly and slowly, we find ourselves wondering what we did with all that time before we were responsible for six children.

Our summer was very busy with traveling to Philadelphia for a conference sponsored by the national A Better Chance program, packing and moving into our new home in the RBC house on 2nd Street, and preparing it for the young men who will make it home for the next four years. Three of our new scholars came the middle of August for sports practices, and we enjoyed spending time with them, showing them Rochester and all of the great things Minnesota has to offer.

Despite the mental preparation for our new role over the past 12 months, there were still several things that surprised us this fall:

- While we would have thought that freshmen in high school were far too old to enjoy going to the park, we also have a 2-year-old who is completely obsessed with the park. The scholars have had to tag along and they have completely surprised me by how much they have enjoyed it. They will swing, slide and play tag until they are out of breath. We take for granted that we have safe, clean parks on about every block in Rochester, a new experience for these young men.
- We have made a conscious effort to expose the boys to outdoor activities while the weather is still such that we can. We have been tubing, hiking, canoeing, and biking on several occasions. My favorite quote from the scholars is “everything is so green.” How much we take for granted that we live in such a beautiful place and have such easy access to the great outdoors.
- Another surprising thing for us had to do with our own children. We had considered how the scholars would react to our children and knew that they would be polite but thought they would be viewed as being somewhat of an annoyance, as little sisters can be. We were not expecting at all how the boys would include Mikaela, our 9-year-old daughter, in their activities and let her hang out with them. They are still working on winning Elise, our 2-year-old, over but they are definitely making progress by playing catch and chasing her around the house. It is exciting to see how this experience is already reshaping their world.



We feel blessed to have the opportunity to share our lives with these four young men on a daily basis and are excited to see all the ways they will use this chance to succeed. While they have been given a great opportunity for a better chance, we feel that we may be the ones who have been given the greater gift to have these fabulous young men in our life.



Rochester A Better Chance Mission Statement

Rochester A Better Chance (RBC) provides bright, talented and aspiring minority candidates with a mentoring and nurturing home environment, optimizing their opportunities to excel in school and community settings. This prepares them for an excellent college education and future leadership opportunities.

Many hands make for light(er) work

The RBC House Committee had a very busy summer getting the house ready for the Moodys and our four new scholars. Thanks to the help from many volunteers from CareFest, Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) and RBC Board members (plus their families and friends), the first and second floors, as well as the basement, look very different.

Windows



Our activities started on June 15 with the arrival of 42 new, custom-made Pella windows. Within four days, Brent and his team from

A Cut Above Builders completed the installation. We immediately noticed a reduction in street noise and are looking forward to a reduction in our future heating bills.



hallways, all the new windows on second floor and the porch deck. An electrician installed nine new ceiling lights. A special thanks to their



leaders, Jerry Fransen, Michael Kopp and Larry Orth, for their dedication and for this ministry of service.

Carefest

The RBC Board is very thankful to have been selected as a CareFest project this year. On June 20, the Carefest volunteers took on so many tasks that it actually required two days to complete the project. They focused on the second floor with additional work on first floor. They repaired walls and ceilings, painted four rooms, two

RPU

On July 7, a team from Rochester Public Utilities (RPU) spent a day painting the living room. Their contributions didn't end that day; they arranged



for an energy audit, new kitchen appliances, and other items on our wish list. A special thanks to Sara Gimberline of RPU for arranging for these much appreciated donations.

Not to be outdone by all these great volunteers, RBC Board members, the

continued

Moodys, plus families and friends spent many hours getting the house ready. The first focus was for the Moodys to move in over the July 4th holiday. The second focus



was ensuring the first and second floors were ready for the arrival of the scholars on August 15. They took on the tasks of cleaning the basement, ensuring all washers and dryers were working,

painting the resident directors master bedroom and bathroom, oiling the dining room wood paneling, staining and varnishing the new first floor windows, washing all the windows, doing a thorough cleaning and trimming the shrubs.

In addition to all the planned work, we had an emergency project. We had hoped to resolve a minor roof leak next year when we will focus on the house exterior. The window installer discovered that the flat roof area over the northeast section of the house was deteriorating quickly. As we were getting it evaluated, the July rains came. Now, not only was the roof leaking a lot, but the chimney was crumbling and dangerous. Thanks to the quick availability of Master Builders, we have a new rubber-membrane roof, no chimney, and vent pipes properly routed to the pitch roof.

We have taken a short pause to catch our breath while the scholars and the Moodys settle in. More work is being scheduled for this fall; the focus will be getting the third floor ready for the boys to use.



Rochester Public Utilities crew

Thank you

We thank the following businesses for donating products and services, and discounting materials that helped make all these improvements possible:

- **Pella Windows & Doors:** 42 new windows
- **A Cut Above Builders:** installed new windows
- **Veolia Environmental Services:** removal of old windows and other materials
- **CareFest 2009:** volunteers repaired walls/ceilings on 1st and 2nd floors and painted many rooms, windows, and porch
- **CnJ Construction:** repaired living room walls
- **Struve's:** paint
- **RPU:** painted living room, arranged for energy audit and new appliances
- **Master Builders:** replaced leaking roof and old chimney
- **Total Home Detailing:** variety of repairs, including replacing rain damaged bedroom ceiling
- **Northern Lights:** 9 new light fixtures
- **Pine Island Hardware:** paint supplies
- **Ernst Associates:** energy audit
- **Warners' Stellian:** new kitchen appliances (refrigerator, stove, microwave)





Rochester A Better Chance

Wishes to thank the many volunteers who helped make improvements to the Rochester A Better Chance house this summer. Together you've helped us build for the future, providing a better chance for a better future for some very promising young leaders.

Adam Ferrari	Janie Fransen	Patty Hanson
Allen Kendall	Jeff Fields	Renda Meloy
Bob Ranfranz	Jerry Fransen	Sandy Haydon
Bria Riess	Jill Smith	Sara Kimberline
Bud Leininger	Jim Preston	Steph Humphrey
Chad Jurgensen	John Archbold	Tami Oeltjen
Charles Johnston	Kale Olson	Terri Lundak
Charlie Gilmore	Kopp family	Terry Olson
Charlie Lajoie	Larry Damme	Tom Deboer
Chris Burns	Larry Orth	Tom Moody
Dan Arms	Laura Andrews	Tony Benson
Darin Knudson	LeAnn Lake	Victoria Cook
Denise Moody	Luann Sculley	Zach/Jen Thaler
Greg Warner	Mark Burns	
Herb Haack	Mary Lou Bartholome	
Jackie Olson	Michael Kopp	
Janet Damme	Pam Haack	

RBC is looking for . . .

- donors to contribute towards the scholars transportation back home at Christmas and the end of school year (8 tickets*\$350=\$2800)
- donors to contribute towards the scholars allowances (\$15/week*4 boys*40 weeks=\$2400)
- donors to contribute to a Scholars GPA Challenge to achieve a 3.5 GPA (\$200 for an event *4 marking periods=\$800)
- anyone willing to donate a large dining room table that would accommodate 10-12 people
- a portable basketball hoop, a storage shed, and boys bikes
- twin beds, household staples such as paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning supplies

Please consider a donation to Rochester A Better Chance . . .

Your contribution is vital to the operations and success of RBC and its scholars. The programs' operational expenses continue to rise, so a monthly contribution would help tremendously. Thank you for considering a donation to Rochester A Better Chance.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

E-mail _____

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

\$75 ___ 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 A Better Chance
P.O. Box 506
Rochester, MN 55903



Additional Options to Consider:

Rochester A 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 A 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.

Rochester A Better Chance
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TUTOR LEADERS - MAYO MEDICAL SCHOOL STUDENTS: Megan Chang, Kelly Nakamura, Chaitanya Pabbati, Mark Sandefur

RESIDENT DIRECTORS: Tom and Denise Moody



*“A Better Chance . . .
For A Better Future”*

We extend our thanks to all who have supported our community program for more than 35 years.