

Editor's Note: The poem printed below is written by Danielle Kelly, 19 years old and a Reach for the Stars graduate, who received a Hertbert and Sylvia Woods scholarship to attend Lehman College in the Bronx where she is now a freshmen. Danielle was not part of the group that worked collectively on this issue, but she was in the Reach for the Stars conference room one afternoon when we were meeting. She asked if she could participate, and this poem is her submission.



DANIELLE KELLY

Author's Note:

I wrote the poem 'Because' to let everybody out there know how many African American women from low income neighborhoods

view themselves. I know this because I live in a neighborhood where I see it every day. Do I view myself as a loser too? No, because seeing those women who have given up has made me want to do better. It pushed me to graduate from high school with a 3.0 average, to attend college and maintain a 3.0 average, to give back to my community through working for SCAN, and to form a little basketball league for girls from the ages of 10-14.

Because...

Because I am black women,

The only way I'm going to be wealthy is by selling drugs, selling my body, or by dating a rich man.

Because I am black women,

I'm going to get fired from a good job for being late and always lazy.

Because I am black women,

I'm going to have a lot of kids, with no father to support them.

Because I am black women,

I'm always loud, and always angry with the world.

Because I am black women,

I'm going to be on welfare, and choose not to better myself.

Because I am black women.

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He wasn't part of my blood family, and so I didn't have to worry about what I said to him. I wasn't nervous or afraid of disappointing him. Although at first he was a stranger, I came to know him, and he became a friend like I had never had before. Soon most of my problems were solved, and I told Raul that I was going to give back to him soon.

With SCAN as my family, I felt like I wanted to help my community. Raul, my big brother, helped me get a job as a Peer Mentor. My job at SCAN is to be an assistant and provide administrative services to SCAN and care to the other Peer

Mentors. I also help the students that are in the SCAN building by tutoring them. My job here at SCAN is to be a role model for all who are in the building.

So far being at SCAN has been fun for me. It has had a major impact on my life and helped me make better choices in life. Also, I met new friends that became part of my family. This new family helped me realize what true family is. They are always there for me when I am down and weak or even happy and joyful. SCAN has influenced my life in many ways. For example, the staff push me to go far and finish school and be what I want to be in life. SCAN also did the most important thing to me, and that was mature me as a gentleman.

Jamel Jackson is 17 years old. He is a sophomore and attends Eagle Academy for Young Men in the Bronx.

SCANLifeLine

LEWIS ZUCHMAN, Executive Director

Empowering SCAN Youth

This newsletter is a true testimonial to the essence of our SCAN family. All of the articles come directly from our young people speaking out about themselves and SCAN. The very process of our respecting their capacity to illustrate SCAN's story serves as a singular empowering experience. Joan Malkin, a SCAN Director and our SCAN Life Editor, has grasped this notion with a special sensitivity. As our SCAN Life captain, Ms. Malkin has expertly steered our ship, balancing the quest to put out a "quality" publication, with the more critical objective of utilizing SCAN Life as an empowerment vehicle for our young people!

100% Local — Our New Offices

On a different, but equally exciting note, I am thrilled to say "Home at last!" After years of toiling away in gloomy basement offices in lower Manhattan, SCAN has finally reconnected with its origins in East Harlem. With the relocation of its administrative offices to 345 East 102nd Street (First Avenue) in March, SCAN has returned to East Harlem just blocks from where Nancy Fisher, SCAN's founder, opened the first SCAN offices in 1977 at Draper Hall on 97th Street and First

Avenue. Reclaiming our heritage as a 100% bona-fide East Harlem/South Bronx community based service provider, the new SCAN offices are within walking distance of many SCAN East Harlem-based program sites. Light, spacious and tasteful (thanks, in main part, to our "decorator" and Deputy Executive Director, Renee Avery), the office space is getting rave reviews from SCAN staff.

Looking Forward, With Thanks

With three decades of significant growth propelling us forward, our thoughts drift back to 1977 and our founders, some of whom have left us in body, but never in spirit, including our very special Founding Directors Marjorie Asche, Helen Borchard, Elsa Daniel and Edith Siegel. We are equally grateful to those other directors who, throughout these past three decades, remain very much with us both in body and in spirit — Jane Overman, our Chairperson, Betty Hess, Vice President, Fran Levitt, and Dr. Margaret McHugh. Together/Contigo we celebrate our New Beginning en el Barrio!



SCAN Calendar of Events

- **April 28** Annual Broadway Theater and Dinner Benefit — 'A Catered Affair'
 - **May 1** SCAN "Goat" Memorial Classic basketball tournament (SCAN Mullaly Academy)
 - **May 1-2** SCAN Staff Retreat (Program Directors)
 - **May 21** SCAN IDOL Competition (Hostos Community College, 6PM)
 - **May 30-31** SCAN Part Time Staff Retreat
 - **June 1** Councilmember Helen Diane Foster Community Hoops Classic (SCAN Mullaly Academy)
 - **June 1** "Disconnected Youth Conference," Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (Baruch College), Lew Zuchman, SCAN Executive Director and Santos Negron, Director of SCAN Young Adult Internship, to serve as Panelists.
 - **June 1** SCAN Summer Day Camps Begin!
- July 8**
- Key: ■ These events are open to the public.

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NEWS FROM SCAN NEW YORK

SPRING/SUMMER 2008

“Tell it Like it is —SCAN Youth Speak Out”

Editor's Note: Since November, a group of SCAN's Reach for the Stars youth have been working with me to put together this issue of the SCAN newsletter. The students were told they could write about absolutely anything. The only limitation was it had to interest them. Notably, all of the students wrote about some aspect of SCAN.

I met with the youth as a group several times a month and, toward the end, weekly. Their articles were aided by my prompting and minor editing, but these are their words. Their writings offer some profound insights, in some cases personal and, in others, about SCAN and its programs. This newsletter celebrates these kids — their struggles, their dedication, their great senses of humor and, above all, their accomplishments.

SCANLIFE Contributing Writers

- Adonis Drummond
- Jamel Jackson
- Joshua Jones
- Kurtis Jones
- Danielle Kelly
- Daniel Maldonado

Help From the Stars

by JAMEL JACKSON



I have grown to love it all. When SCAN became part of my family, I realized what a real family was. At SCAN I am appreciated for who I am. I have built relationships out of trust and love, especially with my boss Vivian. She has helped me with issues that arise at work, so that when there are problems, they are handled.

For example, we trust each other to go to the store for one another. I have helped her in many ways too by following all the rules, which she loves. As her assistant she was happy, in my eyes, because I took any order with out a problem, while others always had attitudes. My peers and other student

September of 2007 marks the day SCAN and I unite. The people, the smelly gym floors after a game, the feeling of being valued —

Before I joined Reach for the Stars, my life was like an up and down rollercoaster ride.

colleagues treat me with respect. When I'm at SCAN, I feel almost as if it were my second home.

But most of all, I have support. In particular, Raul Narvaez, one of the directors of SCAN's Reach for the Stars program, has showed me empathy when I did not get it at home.

Before I joined Reach for the Stars, my life was like an up and down rollercoaster ride. I had problems with some of my relationships, I had difficult talking to my blood family and I was doing poorly in

school. I felt frustrated and lonely and sometimes angry. I felt

this way because there was no one to help me at the time. Not long after starting Reach for the Stars, I felt close enough to talk to Raul. He counseled me; he gave me advice on how to be in a relationship. He also helped me in terms of my grades in school, telling me to stay focused. I listened to him because he was male and easy to speak to.

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