

March 30, 2009

## New Prospects Emerge When Entrepreneurial Creativity Unlocks

She is working on estimating start-up costs and performing a feasibility study for her business. She's a 16-year old sophomore at Bronzeville High School with aspirations to attend Northwestern University to study business and law. This may strike you at first as charmingly ambitious, but a little context may help you understand that she is serious...and we are too. Her name is Brittany Fisher and she is part of our high-school apprenticeship program – a program that uses technology to put feet to the entrepreneurial ambitions of young people, while also preparing them for competitive full-time job placement.

**Pictured Below: Brittany reviews her plan with City Team Leader, David Clark, before her presentation**



Over the last several semesters, Brittany has been developing a résumé-building service called Dynamic Résumés. The word dynamic plays off both the definition of “effective action” *and* the continuous, evolving progress of an individual’s résumé as new skills and experience are achieved.

She kept in mind her friends, schoolmates and community at large in devising this small business plan. She says, “[It] couldn’t be more timely in my community with this economy and since so many in Woodlawn are living below [or at] the [national] poverty line.” At 16 years old she already understands how immensely important it is to have more than a good résumé but, a *great* résumé and the elements that make it such.

Brittany contested her business plan against her peers in this past fall’s Young Entrepreneur Business Review and Expo. She won! (You can find the pictures on our website.) This semester, her job is to expand upon this winning plan, mapping out in greater detail what it will take to come to fruition.

Our apprenticeship program is a collaborative venture with our sponsors at the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and After School Matters. The curriculum, developed in tandem with these two organizations, has received recognition for its ability to increase occupational aspirations, increase leadership behavior and increase interest in its participants to attend college.

Each of these characteristics describes Brittany along with another distinguishing desire – a desire to see her friends at Bronzeville High meet their personal goals and receive the same entrepreneurship training that she has enjoyed.

**Pictured Below: Brittany explains the goals and objectives of her résumé-building services to a panel of judges.**



Consequently, Brittany is our greatest student recruiter, bringing to us approximately 25 of her peers who now have interest in the program. She says she wants all her friends to be encouraged by her “bosses”, Vincent McCaskill and Lue Williams, who have engaged and increased her technical skill.

# Public Murals Depict Health and Promise of Community

March is Spring Break month! Because we recruit mainly high school and college – age students to take part in our Bridge Builders program, this month was also the start of heightened activity at Sunshine. As you may well know, Bridge Builders is our short-term missions program designed to immerse students from around the country in the urban context. The program's weeklong curriculum uses interactive discussion and teaching time in equal part with community service to engage participants, who come from predominately suburban or rural communities, in a cross-cultural conversation regarding matters affecting the urban poor.

Each week we spend nearly 20 hours in large and small group settings learning, talking, praying, and thinking about themes related to our community. The history of the community. The cycle of poverty. Issues surrounding race and ethnicity. Understanding causes of and responses to the poor.

While the program emphasizes listening and learning, participants also engage in service. A similar amount of time is spent in various work projects. The challenge is to ensure each work project is *effective* work – work that is genuinely beneficial to both the community as well as team members. This year our teams are working on an inspiring and extremely creative project: **public murals!!!** These murals are being designed by local artist, Damon Reed, and are being painted and installed by our Bridge Builders participants. The installations will occur on our building, in a public location outside in our community, and in one of our partnering elementary schools.

**Pictured Below: Bridge Builders participants paint, with steady hands, the first of three murals.**



Murals in our community can be a powerful way to reflect the image of God in a contextualized manner. The murals have already been (and we trust will continue to be) well-received in the community, extending our long-term relationships with community residents while also portraying with clarity God's grace and love. Stay tuned to see what transpires from these beautiful projects.

Bridge Builders groups also made significant effort to support Christ Bible Church – one of our local partnering churches - with repairs to their food pantry, cleaning in the church and other things that the church identified as needed projects.

We continued work on a community mapping project, using Google maps to document the foreclosed buildings in our area. Ultimately, the maps will allow us to work with our neighbors to stay on top of the huge number of buildings that are threatening the stability of various blocks.

**Pictured Below: A college student participating in Bridge Builders spends an afternoon tutoring youth.**



Throughout late spring and summer we will continue to send students into different parts of the city, connecting them with about a dozen different ways God is at work in the city. Bridge Builders is fundamentally about casting vision for what it means to understand, effectively love, and join God at work in the communities of the city.

**Our Mission: Sunshine Gospel Ministries exists to seek renewal in the city through ministries of discipleship, mercy, and justice. We do this through building relationships, teaching and mentoring, developing life skills, care and advocacy in our community.**