



# A BETTER CHANCE

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FALL 2010

A BETTER CHANCE OF NEW CANAAN ■ 64 LOCUST AVE., NEW CANAAN, CT ■ WWW.ABHOUSEOFNC.ORG

## Community Celebrates ABC at Fall Fundraiser!

More than 240 ABC supporters turned out to celebrate the organization's 37th year in town at the annual fall fundraiser on September 25th. A Better Chance of New Canaan is a four-year residential program that hosts boys from disadvantaged backgrounds at the ABC House on Locust Avenue in town. The boys live with resident directors Nora McCarthy and Stuart Weiner and their children, attend New Canaan High School and are involved with organizations and activities that give back to the New Canaan community.

This year's event was organized by fundraiser chairs Laura Wilson and Suzanne Einstein and a full committee of volunteers. The evening had a number of highlights, including hearing from our seniors as they thanked the community for their support and viewing a video created by senior Elijah Westbrook. Host parent Richard Hurst served as auctioneer and Henry C. Reid & Son Jewelers contributed an exquisite pair of



Fundraiser Chairs Laura Wilson (left) and Suzanne Einstein with ABC seniors Elijah Westbrook (left) and Joveto DeCarvalho.

diamond earrings for the event's raffle. Local design firm Creative Insights donated their work for the invitations and programs and Kitchens by Deane, Erin Hedley, New Canaan Wine Merchants and Monica Rich Kosann Jewelers were among those who contributed auction items.

## ABC Welcomes Three New Freshman

This fall, the ABC program welcomed three new freshmen to the program, Chris Andrews, Myles Henderson and Justin Olafmihan. The boys were selected from a number of applicants who compete for the opportunity to be part of the ABC program which is the

oldest and largest national program that provides educational opportunities to academically talented minority students. In its many years in New Canaan, the ABC program has been supported by local contributions. During that time, more than 50 host families have helped graduate 68 talented young men who have gone on to successful college, post graduate and professional careers. This year, Tracey and Steve Karl, Susan and Michael Donnelly and Alicia



and Ed Eppler join the ABC family as host parents to our new, incoming students. The boys spend Sundays and one weekend a month with their host families.

**New host parents**  
(left to right) Tracey and Steve Karl with Myles Henderson, Susan Donnelly, Chris Andrews, Ed Eppler, Justin Olafmihan and Alicia Eppler

### PRESIDENT

Melanie Berman

### VICE PRESIDENT

Maarten Terry

### TREASURER

James Slattery

### DIRECTORS

Laura Budd

Susan Boston

Patty Bratches

Pat Calanca

Sally Campbell

Susan Carroll

Michael Curran

Suzanne Einstein

Patti Geanakos

James Holec

Eads Johnson

Polly Perkins Johnson

Diane Knetzger

Jim Kucharczyk

Bitsy Richardson

Jeanie Shaw

Laura Wilson

Lillian Worthley

### HOST FAMILIES

Candace & Michael Curran

Michael & Susan Donnelly

Ed & Alicia Eppler

Wendy & Richard Hurst

Steve & Tracey Karl

Bitsy & Doug Richardson

### HOST FAMILY COORDINATOR

Marianne Grandin

### STAFF

#### Resident Directors

Nora McCarthy

Stuart Weiner

#### Tutors

Melissa McFadden

Chad Southerland

#### Cook

Beth Jones



## President's Corner

One of the things that I am particularly thankful for this

holiday season is the three wonderful new host families

who joined our team this year -- the Donnellys, Epllers and Karls. As a former host parent, I'm a little jealous at the thought of hosting a new ABC student. Our own former ABC student, Eddie Padilla, is now a sophomore at Hamilton College, and we don't see him nearly as often as we'd like.

The student/host family relationship grows over time, because the boys spend most of their time at school and the ABC house. But, out of a single Sunday afternoon and evening each week and a full weekend once a month, a wonderful relationship emerges. Everyone in the family benefits from the process of integrating a new personality and set of needs into the household. There's a lot of give and take and even more discussion about roles and responsibilities, interests and abilities, rules, backgrounds, family rituals and values, school, activities and friends.



Despite the normal issues of having another teenager in the house, our entire extended family looks back on those days as one of the highlights of growing into a family of young adults. Eddie's willingness to try new things — from sports to foods — spurred my own children on. He opened all of our eyes to what one family's life is like in Harlem, what it is like to have a son play football in New Canaan, and how difficult it is to find a summer job in New York City. I like to think our family's love of theater, music, golf and skiing, exposed Eddie to some new experiences. Most importantly, living with a student who appreciated the opportunities that our town and school had to offer was a gift not lost on our own children.

I can't imagine what it is like for our ABC boys' families to let their sons go during the school year, but from our standpoint, it was an enormously enriching experience to have Eddie join our family. We are thankful to have him in our lives and for the memories of the time we all spent growing together.

Thank you all,

*Melani Berman*



### Community Rallies to Renovate ABC House

Over the past summer, a large renovation project took place at the ABC House resulting in an entirely new study room, a much-needed mudroom/cloakroom and living space that functions as a family room.

The renovation would not have been possible without the generous donations of time and expertise on the part of Louise Brooks and her team of architects, Chuck Willette, Mike Benjamin and Kasia Kudrzycki as well as Brian Platz, our Town's Chief Building Official and Thayer West and James Velke of Thayer West Construction. ABC Board Member Eads Johnson raised the capital for the project from community supporters and Board Member Jim Holec oversaw the work to get the project done on time and on budget.

### Friends of ABC

The ABC House of New Canaan thanks the many Friends of ABC who lend their services and support to the program. Special thanks go to Jeannie Altman, Lauren Baker, Christine Bonariggo, Scott Budd, David Cox, George deMenocal, Melinda Fager, Sally Lambdin, Quentin Leo, Amy Freyre, Michelle Luhtala, John Murphy, Charles Otto, Diana Paturzo, Charlie Taben, Laura Walbert and Rodney Yartey. Additional thanks go to The Bank of New Canaan, the Congregational Church of New Canaan, Rick Crolla, OD, Austin W. Feeney, DDS, Robert Fessler, DDS, New Canaan High School, Tony Pavia, Richard Westfal, MD, Whitcomb-Haney College Placement, Carnegie-Pollak Test Prep and many other local organizations.

### Great Home Cooking!

The ABC students and staff are privileged to enjoy the great home cooking of Beth Jones. Beth is joined in photo by Chris Andrews (left) and Justin Olafimihan.



### Operating Budget 2010-2011

Food and Cook Expenses	\$31,800.00
Medical Insurance Expenses	10,200.00
Boys' Expenses including Allowance	34,100.00
Transportation Expenses	2,500.00
Summer and Other Programs	6,100.00
Resident Director Expenses	14,500.00
House Maintenance	26,000.00
Fuel and Utilities Cost	33,100.00
Other Insurance Expenses	17,300.00
Printing and Mailing Expenses	12,000.00
Audit Expenses	8,300.00
Administration Expenses	8,600.00
Depreciation Expense	33,000.00
Fundraising Expenses	49,500.00
Total	\$287,000.00



2010-11 ABC Students: Left to right: Elijah Westbrook, Chris Andrews, Myles Henderson, Devaun Bovell, Justin Olafimihan and Joveto DeCarvalho

Please consider making a donation to ABC today.

Check donations should be sent to:

A Better Chance, Inc. of New Canaan  
P.O. Box 355  
New Canaan, CT 06840

You can also make a donation online via our secure payments system using your credit card.

- Go to [www.abchouseofnc.org](http://www.abchouseofnc.org).
- Click the Paypal Donate button on our home page.

Thank you for your ongoing support!