

AUDREY MILLER PORITZKY EDUCATION FUND FOR CHILDREN

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President's Message

By Laurence H. Miller, M.D.

As I sit down at my desk to write this year's message, I reflect on the activities of the AMP Fund this past year and I am delighted with our successes. Not only did we continue our college essay mentoring evening, we added a second mentoring event in the Spring. We hosted our seventh Youth Speak Out Conference and awarded scholarships. This year, we added two additional scholarships for high school seniors living in transitional settings, more commonly known as shelters. These students are amazing – courageous and dedicated to improving the quality of their lives through education despite not having a stable environment in which to live.

The reference to these students living in shelters leads me to this year's story about Audrey that I want to share.

Shortly after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, Audrey obtained a job at Philadelphia Futures, a non-profit organization whose goal was to expand options and opportunities for Philadelphia youth. One of the main programs for mentoring and scholarship aid was called Sponsor-A-Scholar, a national model which was being replicated in eleven sites across the country. Audrey served as its program assistant, as assistant to the Executive Director, Marciene Mattleman, as well as marketing and public relations coordinator. Typical of Audrey, she multi-tasked better than anyone I know and also wanted to be involved in the program on a personal level.

So, through Sponsor-A-Scholar, she was matched with an African-American high school freshman with the understanding that she would work with this young woman through her freshman year in college.

...Chanae reinforced Audrey's belief that one person really can make a difference.

When they met, Chanae was living in a shelter with her mother and no one in her extended family or close circle of friends had ever been married. Chanae knew people in her neighborhood who had been killed, her high school did spot checks for weapons with metal detectors and some of her friends and schoolmates had babies. Chanae had to carry her coat all day during school because other students were breaking into lockers looking for coats.

It was against this backdrop that Audrey and Chanae developed their relationship as mentor-mentee and friends. Audrey's goal was to introduce Chanae to the broader context of life and to be her guide and role model in this journey. Audrey took Chanae out for long dinners where they would discuss boys, schoolwork, books, movies, future plans and back to boys. Through their years together, Audrey took Chanae to movies, lectures, museums and even on a trip to New York City. Chanae became part of Audrey's family life.

Audrey also became part of Chanae's family, which taught Audrey a lot about the boundaries and respect volunteers must have. As an example, it was Chanae's 16th birthday and her mother and aunt were planning a surprise party. Each family member, including Audrey, was given a specific item to bring since the family members were living on a fixed income and could only afford to buy what they were assigned. Audrey went shopping with the aunt for their items. While at the store, the aunt lamented that she wanted to add more hot dogs so each person could have a whole one but she could not afford to do so. Audrey's initial reaction was to offer to pay for them since it was not so expensive. Realizing that she did not want to embarrass the aunt or others by being the "white volunteer" who outshined the family, she stopped herself. She understood that it was most important to respect the family and know her role as a volunteer, a loving caring one, but still a volunteer.

Chanae's tenacity and dedication to her education inspired Audrey who saw first hand how Chanae did not let her surroundings distract her from her goals.



Audrey and Chanae



Toure, host of FUSE Network's "Hip Hop Shop" and "On the Record with FUSE," moderated the panel discussion.

continued on page 3

AMP Fund Programming: 2011 Highlights

By Dave Poritzky

WAA? That's a question I sometimes ask myself as we plan these AMP Foundation events – "Would Audrey Approve?" As many of you know, Audrey dedicated her professional life to the education-reform cause – serving important roles at a mentoring organization called Philadelphia Futures, at a powerful education foundation named the Wallace Funds, and of course, at Children's Aid Society, where she helped to implement the Community Schools concept...an idea still in practice today.

While I have a pretty good idea that Audrey would have approved the spirit in which the AMP has worked thus far (when she was very ill, her express wish was that we give any anticipated donations in her memory to the education community), I catch myself asking the "WAA question" sometimes.

Fortunately, the answer is usually yes, although I'd like to think that she would have been especially proud of some of our 2011 milestones.

As the year began, the "Youth Speak Out" conference, which had achieved so many important milestones over the years, was in danger of disappearing due to tightening budgets and changing priorities in the city.

However, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) would simply not have it.

As we were frantically conjuring up a "Plan B," perhaps a smaller, alternative means of handing out our annual AMP Fund scholarship awards, we learned that a senior DOE official had contacted Children's Aid Society with an offer to fund the 2011 "Youth Speak Out" conference. The only stipulation was that the event would include not only under-served public schoolchildren, but also would focus on "students in transition," government-speak for children living in shelters, foster homes and other forms of transitional housing.

We were happy to do it, as these students would certainly benefit from the Youth Speak Out conference format. Moreover, the DOE's support allowed us to designate additional scholarship funds to representatives of this group (in the past, we had contributed toward the administrative costs of the conference in addition to the scholarship funds we handed out).

All told, we awarded three AMP Fund scholarships totaling \$4,000, which were promptly matched by Children's Aid Society for an \$8,000 total award, plus the two additional "Students in Transition" scholarships at \$2,500 apiece. We also followed Anne and Larry's suggestion of granting a \$50 honorarium to the remaining 26 applicants, as a way of recognizing the time each student took to write the application essays. We were proud of all the applicants, and seeing them walk confidently and proudly on stage to claim their honoraria was worth many times the honorarium and scholarship amounts.

It was a great day overall, featuring a Town Hall discussion with New York City education leaders and thought-provoking presentations from students, teachers and principals. Topics of concern discussed by the students included inadequate spaces to study or do homework because of overcrowding, loss of supplemental academic services and programs due to budget cuts and strict curfews at shelters that prevent teens from visiting colleges.

The event was capped off by some celebrity guests, including Fuse Network personality (and conference moderator) Touré and former New York Rangers hockey star Adam Graves. Both Touré and Graves spent nearly the full day with us, making sure to get to know many of the students during the day.

More surprises awaited us on the mentoring front, beginning with a springtime "call for volunteers" that resulted in our staffing a special Children's Aid Society program aimed at helping high school seniors work through their college choices and financial plans. At the event, we learned firsthand of the impact of the AMP scholarships, as students often are left with \$5,000-\$10,000 "financing gaps," remaining after their family contributions and standard government-funded financial aid packages are in place. Students are then responsible for identifying sources of lower-level funding to fill these gaps, and our scholarships fall squarely into the mix. Grants such as our top scholarship (\$5,000 after matching) often make the final difference in a student's ability to attend college.

Later in the year, as we prepared for the customary fall essay editing workshop (the event took place on November 1), we received the nicest surprise of all, learning that one of our 2009 volunteers had used our "drop-in" workshop model to start a similar program...in Indiana!

Meanwhile, we had our most eclectic group of volunteers ever – our family and friends, who continue to serve as the event's anchors, were joined by several additional friends-of-friends and professional colleagues, as well as our growing number of volunteers from the Manhattan Jewish Community Center (JCC). This expansion has allowed us to edit more essays, coach more students and continue to build this program for years to come.

From the New York City Department of Education, to an off-season college event, to a workshop in Indiana, we are now beginning to see just how far-reaching and impactful our Fund – and your dollars – can be. Thanks in part to these additional directions, we can answer the "WAA" question with a broad smile. Not only would Audrey approve, but she would have been chasing each of these follow-on events and ideas with vigor, persistence and charm.

AMP INSPIRES

Quentin Ball has participated in the AMP mentoring program. Although he cannot help this year because he moved away, he responded to Dave's request for mentors with the following message.

"Your program had a profound effect on me! Not only did I enjoy volunteering with you, but I maintained my relationship with one of the students in the program. I mentored her through the college application and acceptance program, and we met up numerous times just to keep the relationship going.

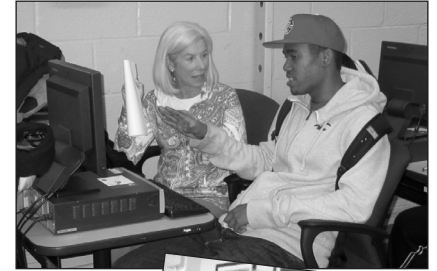
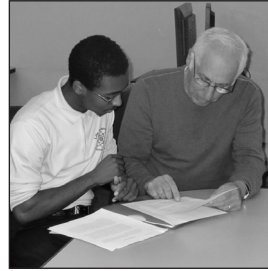
Additionally, I went back to school to get my Master's in Public Affairs as I was inspired by this program and others (I have 10 years work experience and hope I can make a difference at a nonprofit organization). I graduate in December and hope to move back to the East Coast and work in program management.

I started a college access program with children of Habitat for Humanity homeowners, based on your program! I talk to them about college and why/where to apply. Then I work with them to develop college essays and applications. The general idea is that the housing gets the parents out of poverty situations, so I am trying to help the next generation keep it going.

Thank you SO MUCH for letting me be part of your program. It had a huge effect on me!"

2011 College Essay Application Workshop

We were pleased to team up once again with the Children’s Aid Society’s EXCEL program for our 6th annual College Application Essay Workshop, where a group of wonderful volunteers spent an evening with high school seniors, helping them with their college essays and providing advice and guidance as well. We were so proud to be joined by family, friends, colleagues, and even some new faces thanks to our friends at the JCC and New York University. The session was memorable, impactful and fun -- students and volunteers had the chance to work together and learn from one another. We already look forward to next year!



2011 Volunteers

Anita Beeber, Michael Conti, Greg David, Mariam Ehrari, Pauline Kravath, Pei-Hsin Lin, Rob Miller, Jen Patricio, Abby Peccoriello, Leticia Pfeffer, Dave Poritzky (and Sophie!), Eric Poritzky, Sandy Poritzky, Stacy Poritzky, Susan Poritzky, Cheo Rose-Washington and Natalie Weinstein



President’s Message *(continued from page 1)*

From their relationship, Chanae reinforced Audrey’s belief that one person really can make a difference. Audrey skillfully blended her work at the macro level of reforming the Philadelphia education system, with her passion for working on the micro level – helping each student to achieve. Audrey believed that everyone deserved a quality education, and that it was the key to success that can never be taken away.

Audrey’s and Chanae’s relationship lasted long after Chanae’s first year of college – at the University of Pennsylvania. Audrey continued to mentor her through college, long distance since Audrey had moved to New York. Audrey attended Chanae’s graduation and, in turn, Chanae was a guest at Audrey and Dave’s wedding. If Audrey had lived, I know that she and Chanae would still be friends.

We have followed Audrey’s lead in our work at the AMP Fund. Much like Audrey and Chanae who were part of each other’s families, our award winners who become our Student Advisors are part of our family. We are so proud of their achievements. Our first award winner, Wendy Flores, is now a college graduate and the others are not far behind, having exciting opportunities on and off campus through school related travel.



L-R: Larry Miller, Donnell Cunningham (2006 AMP Scholarship Recipient), Wendy Flores (2005), Mavis Gyamera (2009), Tanzina Nawrin (2011) and Richard Buery.

None of this would have been possible without your support. It is your contributions which allow us to offer scholarships. And, just like Audrey who wanted to help every youngster she could, we were able to expand our scholarships and impact on the quality of life of students because of your generosity.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Larry



Richard Buery (AMP Board Member and CEO of Children’s Aid Society), Dave Poritzky and Sophie



Panel discussion with former students in transition, who are now successful college students.



Youth Speak Out students ask questions of educators.

Scholarship Recipients

Once again, the AMP Education Fund for Children awarded three partial college scholarships to New York City college-bound high school seniors. Tanzina Nawrin received the \$2,500 scholarship (matched by CAS). Tanzina was selected from a pool of applicants based on the criteria of Leadership, Scholarship and Community Service, qualities that Audrey demonstrated in her lifetime. In addition to a cash award, Tanzina will join us as a Student Advisor on the AMP Board of Directors.

The 2011 AMP Scholarship Winner: Tanzina Nawrin

Excerpts from Tanzina's Award Winning Essay

When reflecting on my arrival to this country two things stand out: my despair and the lack of assistance available to aid individuals like me. Because I struggled adjusting to this new culture (America), I decided to help others like me adapt to their new environment. I lived in a prominently immigrant Bengali community where children and families did not know the American culture or language. In my freshman year, I began providing tutoring to Bengali immigrant children in my community, and my living room later became a de facto learning center for similar children.

As a student, I consistently attempt to challenge myself. During my sophomore and junior years, I engaged in college level courses at City College of New York through the College Now Program. I also enrolled in Advance Placement (AP) courses in biology and calculus while maintaining a ninety plus grade point average. I was recognized and became a member of the National Honor Society.

Community service is one of my favorite hobbies because I love the feeling I get during and after completing an activity. I have participated in several events initiated by New York Cares, which is the city's leading volunteer organization. I am also a participant of the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development – Teen Action Program. This service learning program has enabled me to be engaged in numerous projects within and outside the school community: disease and disorder walks, restoration of the school's greenhouse, multiple types (food, clothing, blood, and toy) of drives and assisting in local soup kitchens.

Participating in community services motivates me to become a leader, but also helps me understand the needs of different communities. As part of the Teen Action Program, I spearheaded a number of fundraising events, and also campaigned to persuade students to join this valuable program (we have been the second largest after-school program in the school), while also motivating participants to fulfill their commitment to the tasks.

Education, service and leadership have been milestones to success for me. As a student I have learned to appreciate, recognize and work more diligently because of how much I value these pillars. Education, service and leadership have helped me enrich my life by allowing me to become more committed and responsible. I believe these pillars will continue to assist me in my life journey.



Our three 2011 AMP Scholarship Recipients:
Tanzina Nawrin, Jessica Gooden & Danielle Cureton.

Fall 2011 Updates From Our Past Scholarship Recipients



Wendy Flores (2005)

Wendy, our first AMP scholarship recipient, is currently employed with JP Morgan Chase as a Personal Banker. She majored in Sociology at SUNY Binghamton and would like to pursue a graduate degree in business administration and use it either in corporate giving or non-profit.

Wendy has continued her philanthropic endeavors as an AMP Board Member by volunteering for the Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure and she has participated in scholarship fundraisers led by the Upsilon Nu Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

In her own words "While having won the Audrey Miller Poritzky Scholarship 6 years ago, I find it to still be helping me. Initially, the Scholarship helped me pay for one semester's worth of tuition at CUNY City College. However, being part of the board has helped me stay involved with the organization and give back to young people. The Audrey Miller Poritzky Education Fund along with The Children's Aid Society have spearheaded The Youth Speak Out Conference, giving young people the opportunity not only to speak out – but also to be heard by politicians and educational leaders. Being a part of something so powerful has been very rewarding. In addition to this, I have gained an additional family. While we meet once a year, the Miller-Poritzky family has been a group of individual that have given me motivation and support throughout the years – and this has proven to be priceless."



Florence Wen (2008)

Florence is a senior at Syracuse University where she is majoring in Biology and Public Relations. She is currently doing research in a biology lab on sexual selection and animal behavior. In the Spring of 2011 she went to Ecuador and learned to speak Spanish. From there, Florence went to Costa Rica, using money that she saved up, to take more Spanish courses.

Florence is hoping to apply to a graduate school with conservation biology programs. She plans to apply to Masters and PhD programs and she has also applied to the Fulbright Fellowship in hope of returning to Ecuador to teach English for a year.

Florence writes, "I periodically go to the AMP website and read about Audrey's life and about what she believed in. Although I never got the chance to meet her, I can tell that she was always loving and compassionate. She must have worked hard for what she believed in and she continues to inspire me to believe in my dreams. When I am overwhelmed with the pressures of school, work, my family, and my future, I remember that I am not alone in this journey. I have said this before, but it really means a lot to me that I have people who believe in me and my future. I truly want to thank the AMP Fund for believing in me and for being such an important supporter throughout my college education."

Fall 2011 Updates From Our Past Scholarship Recipients Continued...



Kristina Bryce (2010)

Kristina is currently a sophomore at St. John's University. Her interests are pharmacy and early childhood education.

Kristina writes, "The AMP Scholarship has allowed me to focus on my studies rather than taking on more work-study hours to bridge the gap in my financial aid package. It is also wonderful to be

linked to an organization that was founded in the memory of an educator. This past summer, I worked as an Operations Coordinator with Teach for America's Atlanta Institute in Atlanta, Georgia. Teach for America's purpose is to place very qualified, young, energetic teachers in schools in low-income areas around the United States to ensure that these children receive an excellent education. Though I was not a corps member (one of the teachers), I was a staff member working closely with the corps members. Their energy and dedication was inspiring! I was honored to help them on their way to making a difference in the lives of thousands of children affected by poverty across this country."



Tanzina Nawrin (2011)

In Tanzina's words, "I am currently attending Brooklyn College under City University of New York. I am a freshman in college and so far it has been going great. I am majoring in Biology for Pre-medicine. I want to become a doctor when I grow up. Currently I am enrolled in this program called RISE (Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement). I want to become a Bio-medical researcher if becoming a

doctor does not work out. I also did an internship with Life Force-In-Later-Years this summer. I want to get involved and join more programs but I have not had the time to do so.

AMP scholarship has helped me tremendously in my college career. Having this financial assistance to support my endeavors mitigates the financial burden. The medical profession is a long and expensive track, as such; this scholarship will minimize the inevitable debt that I will incur in the future. In addition, it has helped me pay for tuition, books and transportation. Thank you very much for this wonderful opportunity. I truly appreciate it."



Mehedi Hassan (2010)

Mehedi is a sophomore at Wake Forest University where he is studying economics in the School of Business with a major in accountancy. He traveled to Nicaragua this summer to provide service with NicaHope Organization, an organization that helps underprivileged students with resources needed for a secondary education.

He wrote, "AMP has provided me the opportunity to financially support myself and use the monetary value on my education."



Jessica Gooden (2011)

Jessica is a freshman at Mercy College. Her areas of interest are Health Science and Television Production. She has joined the school's Step Team and Volunteer Club and is enjoying every aspect of her schooling.

She says that "The Audrey Miller Poritzky Scholarship has helped me to enjoy school without having to worry about how I am going to pay the balance of what my financial aid does not cover."

Special Award Recipients

This year, AMP was able to award two additional scholarships to Students in Transition. These two individuals have displayed Audrey's qualities of leadership, scholarship and community service while living under the most difficult circumstances. We are proud to provide excerpts from their award winning essays.



Sharif Aidara (2011)

In life, one is bound to face several hardships. However, the way one reacts to these hardships determines the amount of success an individual will endure. From living in a shelter and traveling two hours to school, I have experienced a lot of hardships. Fortunately, I have managed to remain motivated and dedicated and continue to strive to obtain my goals.

Fortunately, I realized that living in a shelter doesn't make me different. I refused to allow my personal issues to affect my academics, for my schoolwork is the gateway towards success. Living in a shelter has actually allowed me to use all of my experiences as a stepping stone towards becoming an overall better person.

Sharif is a freshman at Stony Brook University where he is majoring in mechanical engineering. He states that "The AMP scholarship will really relieve me of some of the financial burdens of paying for school."



Shawntavia Williams (2011)

Growing up, my mother would always say to me "you made your bed now you have to lie in it." I never knew that the bed I made wouldn't be my own. The bed that I lie in at night is a constant reminder that if I want to succeed in life and be the best that I can, then I would have to be sure and cautious of the decisions I make. I would have to work hard, take my education seriously and prepare myself to be successful.

Being active in my high school has not always been a walk in the park. I have constantly been forced to relocate. Waking up to see new faces every other week has taken a toll on me both academically and socially. Being in a temporary housing shelter can either make or break a person. I would like to consider myself as an individual it made not only stronger but also more determined to acquire a better life for both my family and me.

Shawntavia is a freshman at the CUNY of Staten Island. She is majoring in Nursing, which she hopes will lead her to become a registered nurse. She volunteers at a homeless shelter in Brooklyn and helps children with their homework.

Shawntavia says that "The AMP scholarship has helped me through my first couple of months with my books and my moving." She no longer lives with her mom since she is now able to live in a dorm apartment.

“Dear D.O.E”

By Precious Quick and Nia Thompson

Precious is currently a freshman at Bronx Community College and is majoring in mathematics. She is hoping to transfer to Stoney Brook University to continue her education. Precious is currently involved in the school's girls basketball team, track team and art club while also doing a work study program. Her dream is to become a math teacher.

Precious and Nia recited their original poem with passion and intensity at the 2011 Youth Speak Out Conference.



WHEN I GROW UP I want to become a Veterinarian.
I want to be that person that gives your sick dog its medicine.
I want to take all the dogs and cats, puppies and kittens
and place them in a safer place to live in
that's what I want to do

WHEN I GROW UP I want to become a mathematician.
I want to be able to teach the students before me to solve problems
and afterwards not want to take a drug prescription.
I'm not trying to be anybody's hero
but I do want them to understand that $36x + 2x - 38x$
does in fact equal 0
numbers in my brain somehow automatically organize it selves making
it impossible for me to go insane.
But, learning this for 45 minutes a day doesn't seem enough for me,
I just wish that in my spare time
I could be able learn more in my schools LIBRARY

We do not
forgetting, they forgot about the key of education
we want more but they kept us waiting
now this is the key to success, without a library we have less.
For what a student is supposed to have
without research, how will we PASS,
me the ball during my fifth period class,
we play in here because A GYM IS WHAT WE DON'T HAVE
And without that gym, dreams don't last
that basketball player that never met a defeat,
he was great at stealing and shooting the ball on the courts
but he got more shine when he started stealing and shooting on the streets.
Swayed by the crowd he was always swept off his feet,
he saw a change but nobody listened

because he sagged his pants below his knees
and there was just standards he never seemed to meet
so he just gave up on trying to SPEAK

Loud, sound happy and proud, taunted by the words of oppression
Unheard because of all that forgetting
No way to put on a show
Or show you a lesson
No space, no time
No time to let in the students that was hurt,
ONLY TIME JUST MAKES IT WORST
The only way to help her, is to see her become an actress
Act, unless the street get her first
No matter , just pain and hurt
No voice, so she just gave up on trying to speak,
NO AUDITORIUM TO SPEAK UP and
no place for the principle and teacher to meet
And to tell the student, "come take a seat."
Just a cafeteria to sit and eat
IF ONLY SOMEONE STOPPED, AND LISTENED

Because behind these closed doors there's talent hidden
But there doesn't seem to be a place for them to fit in
Like that basketball player

Or that Actress
Or maybe that poet
BUT THERE'S NO PLACE IN OUR SCHOOL TO PRACTICE
Dreams are left at home on their mattress
And the true of the fact is
I hope to someday see my school
RELEASE SOME OF THE DREAMS
THAT HAVE LONG BEEN CAPTURED

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Please visit us at www.ampeducationfund.org

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