

St. Mary's Emphasizes Importance of Reading

This summer the Storymobile, sponsored by ReadBoston, a local initiative promoting literacy, is paying weekly visits to the St. Mary's campus.

Every Monday afternoon for six weeks, the Storymobile arrives with a professional storyteller who not only delights the children with entertaining tales, but also allows



each child to select a new book for their personal libraries.

With educational deficits at the core of

poverty, equipping children and women with academic skills and educational resources is literally at the heart of St. Mary's work. From early morning to late at night, St. Mary's clients are participating in some type of educational activity, such as the Storymobile, that will have a positive impact on their lives. For example, children and teen mothers staying at St. Mary's attend school in their community or on campus at Boston Public School's St. Mary's Alternative School for pregnant teens. Well-stocked libraries in the organization's residential programs help encourage mother-child bonding by reading a bedtime story together.

But St. Mary's commitment to reading and literacy touches more than just children and teens. Mothers gain basic educational skills through GED instruction, reading and math tutoring from staff and volunteers, and assistance with learning disabilities they didn't know they had or were afraid to deal with. Whether supporting mothers and children independently or the family unit as



a whole, St. Mary's offers many opportunities to immerse themselves in a learning environment, helping them break the intergenerational cycle of limited education and poverty.

St. Mary's understands the importance of literacy and knows that reading outside the classroom directly correlates to a child's success in school. The Storymobile is just one of many ways St. Mary's works to ensure that its families achieve that success.

Shop 'Til You Drop

On Saturday, September 20, St. Mary's will take part in an important and fun event which has the potential to raise critical funds for our programs and services. Macy's annual Shop for a Cause Day raises money for deserving, local non-profits throughout the country and St. Mary's has been chosen as a beneficiary.

In order to support St. Mary's through Shop for a Cause Day, you must purchase a \$5 shopping pass which grants you access to Macy's for this special event where you will receive fantastic discounts on merchandise, all while raising much-needed money for St. Mary's.

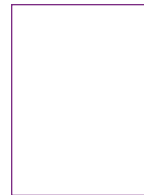
We urge you to take part in this unique

and exciting event. 100% of the proceeds of each shopping pass sold by St. Mary's will be given directly to us. These dollars will be immediately put to work, supporting the life-changing programs and services we provide to more than 400 women and children each year.

If you are interested in purchasing a shopping pass to benefit St. Mary's, please contact Stacey Gardner at sgardner@smwcc.org or at 617.436.8600, ext. 310.



We greatly appreciate your support of St. Mary's and Macy's Shop for a Cause Day.



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Contact Information
90 Cushing Avenue • Dorchester, MA 02125
617•436•8600

Jane Boulet
Director of Development & Public Relations
jboulet@smwcc.org, ext. 491

With Love Contributor: Erin Danby

Visit us on the web at smwcc.org!

Vision Statement and Programs

Since 1993, **St. Mary's Women and Children's Center** has been providing life-changing support services to homeless and low-income women, children, and families. A member of the Archdiocese of Boston, St. Mary's provides at-risk populations with the resources and skills necessary to build stable, healthy lives in the community through one or more of the following six programs:

St. Mary's Home, Boston's largest residential program for pregnant and parenting teens, serves 18 teens and their infants or toddlers, helping them deal with the challenges of parenting while also pursuing educational, vocational, and personal goals.

Margaret's House is the largest family shelter in Boston, serving 32 homeless women and their children. The program provides transitional housing and services to help increase each mother's likelihood for success in improving her skills and obtaining and sustaining permanent housing.

Bridge Home is a 12-bed emergency shelter for children, newborn to 12 years old, who are victims of severe abuse and neglect.

Women@Work is a 20-week job skills training program for homeless and low-income women that integrates a unique mix of academic remediation, case management and advocacy, and job readiness instruction into its rigorous curriculum.

The **Women's Learning Center** instructs up to 24 students at any given time in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and preparation for the General Educational Development (GED) testing series.

GRLZ Radio is an innovative after-school and summer youth development program that gives teenage girls in Boston's neighborhoods a voice. Broadcasting daily on the web at grlzradio.org, GRLZ Radio allows young women to build technical and leadership skills and provides violence prevention resources.



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SAVE-THE-DATE!
Diamonds of Dorchester
March 26, 2009
Seaport Hotel, Boston



with **Love**

St. Mary's Teen is Blue Scholar

Katherine Toscano is sixteen-years-old and just finished her freshman year at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School in Boston. Like many sixteen-year-olds, Katherine works a summer job, is dreaming about college and what career she wants to pursue, and enjoys time with her boyfriend, Bryan.

But Katherine also has a few other things going on that keep her busy and set her apart from most teenagers. Katherine has a one-year-old son, Bryan Legrand, Jr., named after his father. Katherine lives at St. Mary's Home, a residential program for pregnant and parenting teens, and her summer job is not at an ice cream shop, it's at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. To say that Katherine is wise beyond her years only begins to describe her.



Katherine and Bryan celebrated Father's Day at St. Mary's with their son, Bryan, on June 23.

Last July, Katherine was nearly nine months pregnant and living in foster care. It was then that the Department of Social Services stepped in and mandated that Katherine be

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Bridge Home Kids Learn to Self-soothe

When children arrive at Bridge Home, our emergency shelter serving newborns to twelve-year-olds, they have suffered unspeakable abuse and neglect and are almost always frightened and withdrawn.

Their stay at Bridge Home is a critical opportunity for them to develop coping skills and begin their recovery from past harm. The Bridge Home staff recognize this and the chance they have to instill the promise of a more hopeful and safe future in these children who have suffered so greatly. The staff understands that one of the most invaluable skills they can provide to these children is the ability to self-soothe and calm themselves when they are anxious or frightened.

As Bridge Home continues to deepen the intensity of its clinical work with kids, it has added a space dedicated to helping children learn this skill.

The room is equipped with items which help the kids cope with and make up for the affection, attention, and nurturing that was sorely missing from their own families, like the snug, calming cocoon feel of a "body sock," or the enveloping comfort of a bean bag chair.

The goal is for children to leave Bridge Home with a skill that will serve them well beyond their young lives, well into their futures.

From the President

Dear Friends:



I always look forward to this time of year when I have the opportunity to share some of the great moments and stories with you from St. Mary's past twelve months.

This year, like all others, has been one of extraordinary accomplishments by our women, children, and families, one where our staff challenged itself to reach new levels of success and our programs continued to develop and grow. This year has also been one of great transition for St. Mary's.

As many of you may know, St. Mary's Board of Trustees and senior management made the decision to remain with the Archdiocese of Boston, but to separate from Caritas Christi Health Care System, late last year. Chair Ann-Ellen Hornidge captured the sentiment of all trustees when she said, "This change was the result of a journey that this board took together in its determination to find the best fit for the mission and the future of our great agency."

As St. Mary's proceeds through this transition, senior management is working with a small group of trustees to finalize processes, procedures, and outcomes as a result of the organization's new status. I am confident that St. Mary's is moving in the right direction and we remain grateful for the safe haven Caritas Christi provided.

I look forward to updating you in the coming months as St. Mary's continues to set new goals and to provide our women and children with the very best programs and services.

Warm regards,

Judith Beckler, President

GRLZ Radio DJ Off to College

As GRLZ Radio celebrated its many successes on June 12 at its annual fundraiser, there was a bittersweet element to the event. As the station continues to grow, it will have to do so without one of its true stars. Zakiyyah Sutton, otherwise known as "DJ Lady Harmony," will no longer be at GRLZ Radio.

On June 13, Zakiyyah graduated from Boston Arts Academy, where she was class



Above: Zakiyyah at the microphone prior to one of her shows. At right: Zakiyyah enjoys the company of the friends she made through GRLZ Radio.

valedictorian, student body president, and graduated with a 4.8 grade point average.

Zakiyyah became part of the St. Mary's family in 2005 when GRLZ Radio visited Boston Arts Academy. Zakiyyah has been singing her whole life and when she learned about the opportunity to be a part of the radio station she jumped at it. As she says, she "loves music and loves to talk," so it was a perfect fit.

After spending a brief time training, Zakiyyah earned herself an on-air spot, where she conducted interviews, including one with St. Mary's President, Judy Beckler. She also proudly describes how she brought new kinds of music like jazz and classical to the station.

The mission of GRLZ Radio is to give

young women a voice, and that is exactly what it did for Zakiyyah. "It blossomed me," describes Zakiyyah, "it helped me grow and it brought me a sense of sisterhood -- a connection. That is what I will miss the most."

GRLZ Radio allows adolescent girls to gain broadcasting skills, build a positive identity, and speak out to other community youth on violence prevention and other issues important to them. More than just a radio station, GRLZ Radio is a one-of-a-kind youth development program that empowers girls from some of Boston's most underserved neighborhoods to rise above gender stereotypes and develop personal and educational assets that will help them shape their lives and dreams.

In the fall, Zakiyyah will be taking what she's learned at GRLZ Radio with her as she begins her freshman year at



A Model Neighbor: Partnership Profile

During a 20-week Women@Work job readiness training program, participants learn to prepare a resume, perform financial tasks, process computer data, file documents, and provide customer service.

Participants also learn from professionals from various industries who volunteer to teach the classes and share information about job opportunities within their fields.



Above: Nichole Anderson (left) with Bessie Payne, another Corcoran Management employee following a Women@Work training. Below: Dahlia Walker prepares for her work day at Commonwealth Development.

St. Mary's is very fortunate to have strong relationships with many local organizations that provide internships and placement opportunities for the Women@Work graduates. One of our strongest relationships is with Corcoran Management Company, who has hired three full-time employees and sponsored eight interns since the employee partnership began.

Currently two Women@Work graduates, Nichole Anderson and Dahlia Walker, are employed at Corcoran Management as a leasing consultant at Faxon Properties and a leasing consultant at Commonwealth Development respectively. Charlene Pirkle was also employed as a leasing consultant at Corcoran's property, Quincy Commons, and has since left to become a successful real estate agent, equipped with valuable on-the-

job experience and real estate licensing classes.

Nichole Anderson is continuing in the Corcoran tradition, as she has returned to St. Mary's as a presenter at the Women@Work trainings. She provides inspiration, hope, and a tangible example of the career possibilities available to Women@Work graduates.

Corcoran Management's partnership with St. Mary's dates back many years and stems from the incredible generosity and commitment of John M. Corcoran, the late founder of Corcoran Management and former member of St. Mary's board of directors. John was a firm believer in giving back and his legacy lives on in his company's commitment to do the same.

Corcoran Management initially became involved with St. Mary's through the organization's Bridge Home shelter for children who are victims of abuse. For many years, Corcoran Management has provided Christmas presents for the children of Bridge Home. This led Leslie Scribner, office manager at Corcoran Management, to another idea. Leslie began collecting professional



Charlene Pirkle graduated from the Women@Work program in December 2005.

Throughout all the iterations of St. Mary's partnership with Corcoran Management, Leslie has remained closely involved and is a wonderful champion and advocate of the program and now serves on the organization's Education and Training Advisory Board, offering professional advice and counsel.

Corcoran Management was recently recognized for their commitment to the community when the staff was presented with the Good Neighbor Award by the National Multi Housing Council. As the award recipient, they were presented with a check for \$5,000, which they very generously donated to St. Mary's.



The staff from Corcoran Management accepts a check on behalf of St. Mary's from the National Multi Housing Council. From left to right: Douglas Bibby, President of NMHC; Richard High, President of John M. Corcoran & Co. and Corcoran Management Co.; Cynthia Buckley; Nancy Gaudet; Carol MacDonald; Leslie Scribner; Nat Nichols; and Richard Campo.

clothing for women and delivering them to St. Mary's for their Women@Work program. Out of this, they became an employee partner of St. Mary's. Employee partners are companies and organizations that provide internships and job opportunities for Women@Work graduates.

Perhaps Corcoran Management's commitment to St. Mary's can be best described by one of its own, Leslie Scribner: "I think we all realize how easily we could be sitting at the other side of the table. Through no wrong doing of their own, these women are presented with challenges which could make finding a job more difficult. The right thing to do is help others."

Katherine

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sent to St. Mary's. She was unhappy to be moving yet again and didn't really see what St. Mary's could offer her, beyond a consistent place to sleep. Shortly after coming to St. Mary's, Katherine gave birth to Bryan Jr. with his father by her side.

Despite her hesitations about coming to St. Mary's, both Katherine and Bryan knew it would have at least one benefit - it would provide them with knowledge and a support system that would in-turn benefit their son. Katherine soon realized she had access to many different services, including parenting classes and day care services, as well as a supportive, responsive environment that encourages her and fellow teen moms to finish high school, develop a positive self-image, and practice healthy behaviors.

The St. Mary's Home program model, rooted in evidence-based practice, is designed to support each teen mother within the context of her life, her relationships, and the society in which she lives. This holistic approach encourages positive connections for the teens at their schools and with friends, relatives, churches, and in the community. It also promotes healthy relationships with their babies and the father of their babies, creating solid foundations for these young families as they journey toward more hopeful lives. St. Mary's Home also teaches teens new skills that build on existing strengths, giving young mothers the opportunity to not only learn how to care for their child but also in the process build self-esteem, control, and positive social behaviors, all of which will greatly support a healthy, successful future for themselves and their child.

Katherine is taking full advantage of the services provided by St. Mary's and is finding great success, both personally and professionally. At the beginning of her freshman year, Katherine was encouraged to apply for the Blue Scholar Program, sponsored by Blue Cross Blue Shield of

Massachusetts, which aims to help high-potential students achieve their academic and career goals. Katherine was named a Blue Scholar this past January and for the next four years, she will be mentored every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at the Landmark Center, Blue Cross and Blue Shield's corporate headquarters, where she has already begun to learn valuable skills, such as how to build a resume, perform well in job interviews, and the ins and outs of the college application process.

Some of these skills were quickly put to use when Katherine decided to apply for a summer job. Her goal is to become a doctor, so when the time came to select places to apply she knew she wanted to work in a medical center. Katherine was a stand-out in her interviews and was offered positions at both Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. This summer, Katherine is working 40 hours a week in the Head and Neck Oncology department at Dana-Farber.

Katherine hopes that her summer job will help her decide what kind of doctor she wants to be. There are two things she is sure of - that she wants to help others and that she wants to be able to provide her son with opportunities and resources she did not have. As Katherine describes it, "I never want him to have to ask someone to pay attention to him and to give him what he needs, like I had to growing up."

Katherine is looking forward to the future with Bryan Sr. and Bryan Jr. and she is extremely grateful for the support she has received from Bryan Sr.'s father, Omar, his stepmother, Susan, and his younger brother, Christopher. Katherine is also grateful to St. Mary's for giving her and Bryan Jr. a safe place to live, access to services and opportunities she would not have had otherwise, and the security to be able to pursue the dreams for her young family.



St. Mary's President Judy Beckler presents Ray Tye (center) and his family with the Corcoran Award.

Diamonds of Dorchester

Nearly 500 guests gathered at the Seaport Hotel on April 3 for the 5th annual *Diamonds of Dorchester* gala fundraiser celebrating St. Mary's transformational work with families.

A very special part of *Diamonds of Dorchester* is the John M. Corcoran Award for Excellence presented this year to Mr. Raymond Tye and Father Bill McCarthy. As Chairman of United Liquors and The Ray Tye Medical Aid Foundation, Ray has touched an astounding number of lives, many of them children, in the U.S. and beyond. Father Bill McCarthy founded Father Bill's Place in Quincy in 1984, now known as Father Bill's and Main Spring, sheltering 2,000 homeless people annually throughout Southeastern Massachusetts.

Thank you to *Diamonds of Dorchester* sponsors and co-chairs John Keith and Shelley Hoon and Arthur and Alicia Winn for making this year's gala a memorable and successful evening. More than \$500,000 was raised to support St. Mary's life-changing work with Boston's most vulnerable women and children.



Father Bill is a true champion for homeless families from Quincy to Middleboro.

SAVE-THE-DATE!
March 26, 2009 - Seaport Hotel

Please mark your calendars for the 6th annual *Diamonds of Dorchester* gala fundraiser!