

JAMAL Herald

Summer, 2010 Volume 1, Number 2

Jamal Place Sponsors Statewide Collaborative Problem Solving Training



Dr. Ross Greene presents to Illinois' residential providers.

On Friday, April 9, 2010, Jamal Place, Inc. hosted Dr. Ross Greene at the Lisle Hyatt Hotel, to share his collaborative problem solving model with residential child welfare program staff from around the state. Dr. Greene is an Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Harvard Medical School. He developed the collaborative problem solving technique which is a useful tool to use with explosive, angry and aggressive youth. As agencies across the state are receiving more referrals of youth who have extensive histories of aggression, anger and criminal acting out behaviors, Jamal Place felt that inviting Dr. Greene to share the key concepts of his model would stimulate needed discussions on how to best to respond to and treat the youth currently entering the residential child welfare system.

Dr. Greene emphasized that his collaborative problem solving model is a more "compassionate, accurate and productive" method which can help behaviorally challenged kids respond to frustration and anger. Greene shared

with the 140 conference attendees that social, emotional, and behavioral challenges in kids are best understood as the byproduct of lagging cognitive skills in the domains of flexibility/ adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem-solving (rather than as attention-seeking, manipulative, limit-testing, or a sign of poor motivation). Greene stressed that challenging behavior is a form of developmental delay. He further identified that these challenges are best addressed by collaboratively resolving the problems which prepare the stage for challenging behavior. Greene eschews traditional reward and punishment programs and examples of "intensive imposition of adult will" on youth who have disruptive and challenging behavior.

Greene believes that collaborative problem solving is

important because oppositional kids are poorly understood and treated in ways that are unhelpful and counterproductive. If the treatment isn't working, youth are at increased risk for adverse long-term outcomes. Greene passionately asserted that those negative outcomes don't need to exist. Dr. Greene reinforced to conference attendees the point that "if kids could do well they would do well." If youth are taught the skills to exhibit adaptive behavior, they would not demonstrate the level of challenging and oppositional behavior that child welfare programs are currently seeing.

The April 9th conference was the introduction of a model that will require weekly agency training. Work is in progress for agencies to join together for the trainings—containing training costs and sharing ideas, success and struggles. Jamal Place thanks Dr. Greene for introducing the collaborative problem solving model to Illinois child welfare agencies and gives a special thanks to Onarga Academy for sponsoring the continuing education credits for Dr. Greene's presentation.

More information on the collaborative problem solving model can be found at: www.livesinthebalance.org

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Letter from the Director

June, 2010



Ann G. Deuel, Executive Director, Jamal Place, Inc.

Dear Friends,

There are several definitions of “home” in the Webster’s New World College Dictionary Fourth Edition: “1. A place where a person or family lives; 2. The place where one was born or reared; 3. A place thought of as home, specifically a place where one wants likes to be; [a] restful or congenial place; 5. An institution for the care of orphans...and [the] helpless...”

When Jamal Place, Inc. opened 15 years ago this summer, we planned to create a home to raise children in an environment that would be healing, restful and congenial. More importantly, we wanted Jamal Place to be a home where boys wanted to be—where healing could occur, potential developed and an extended family created to provide the support that natural families were unable to provide.

Over the years I have shared positive stories of our boys in this newsletter and our annual reports. Many of those stories were written or told by the boys themselves. My staff members and I have countless letters and many memories and moments of conversations where young men have taken a moment to say thank you and express their gratitude for

our commitment to them. It has been a mutually rewarding experience—for we have gained as much from their involvement in our lives as they have from ours.

As I write this letter, Jamal Place is facing a challenge that far exceeds the challenges presented by the behaviors of emotionally or behaviorally difficult youth or the ever present state budget shortfalls. In short, the state told us in mid May that they would not renew our group home contract based on our “poor” performance in the first performance based contracting year of FY ‘09. The state measures an agency’s performance by days that the kids are physically present in the group home. If a boy goes on run, is hospitalized or is in detention, those “empty bed” days count against an agency. This outcome measure was chosen because it is quantifiable—but it does not consider the qualitative factor that a boy, due to his mental health diagnosis, may require hospitalization to stabilize behaviors which could pose a danger to himself or others. Nor does this quantifiable measure address the lack of control an agency has if a judge decides to detain a youth for a crime he has committed. Moreover, some youth have family members who “harbor” them while on run. Rather than working with our agency, some families sabotage treatment—a sad, but true fact.

Over the past two years, I have written in this space about our preparation for the performance based contracting rollout, our struggle with the “no decline” stipulation and the impact of a 90% turnover of youth during our agency’s first operational year

of performance based contracting. I have also shared the community challenges (poor schools, gangs, drugs and uncooperative families) which also negatively impacted our group home’s treatment opportunity days. Unfortunately, there are no measures currently being used to record incremental improvements in youth behavior which occur as trusting relationships develop—fewer aggressive episodes from one year to the next, fewer criminal activities, fewer days on the streets running with gangs or engaging in negative behaviors. These changes do not occur overnight—but the fact that change occurs is important...but currently ignored because it is not easily quantified.

In order to mitigate the external factors which negatively impacted our FY ‘09 performance, Jamal Place initiated an internal review of its group home program. Our findings were shared with Judge Kate Kearney of Florida, who is the federal oversight monitor of Illinois’ first year’s implementation of statewide residential performance based contracting. Jamal Place also brought in a clinical consultant to find the strengths and weaknesses of our group home programming and to make recommendations to strengthen clinical and operational areas. Those recommendations required the elimination of a couple of leadership positions in the group home and a restructuring of the daily schedule and level system for the kids. Moreover, Jamal Place organized a statewide conference featuring Harvard psychologist, Dr. Ross Greene, who shared his work in the collaborative problem solving model which is recog-

nized as an effective clinical tool to use with kids who are diagnosed with conduct and oppositional defiant disorders.

Despite the internal changes we have made to improve the quantitative group home performance, our group home contract was denied. We are working to appeal what we consider a premature and unfair decision to close our group home program...particularly given the limited time that performance based contracting has been in effect. An implementation study used by Judge Kearney to evaluate the first year of performance based contracting clearly stated:

“A test of evidence-based practice or program effectiveness at implementation sites should occur only after they are fully operational, that is, at the point where the interventions and the systems supporting those interventions within an agency are well integrated and have had a chance to be fully implemented.” This test of effectiveness was not considered in our case.

Many of you have shared your support with phone calls and letters to Governor Quinn and your elected officials. I ask that you continue to make your voices heard. It has been my life’s mission to provide opportunities to kids who desperately need people to care about them. Fifteen years ago we opened Jamal Place as a 501 (c) 3 organization with the faith that “God would provide”. Working with our boys has not been a six, 12 or 18 month commitment (as the push in performance based contracting has become). Rather, Jamal Place was conceived as a healthy, extended family resource for

kids who require that additional support. In the past few weeks, I have received three phone calls from kids who have been out of our care for a minimum of a year (and for as long as six years). Each young man needed some type of help or guidance and each received

bers is not a “measurable” outcome. Having a human connection could mean the difference between life and death for some of our kids. Boys who are cared about (and who have the capacity to care about someone else) are less likely to cause community harm—I think that is an important outcome—whether or not it can be “quantified”.

I believe that our collective work and concern for kids over the past 15 years has not been in vain and has made a difference in many lives. At this point in time I do not know what the final chapter of this story is going to be—but I ask you to be contributing editors in the faith story that is unfolding. I also hope that you will help us by participating in our 15th annual anniversary picnic and walkathon on Saturday, June 26, 2010 in Douglas Park—we have a great many things to celebrate. Please

also join us in a spiritual celebration of our youth, our work and the great possibilities of faith on Sunday, July 11, 2010 at St. Agatha’s Catholic Church at the 10:30 a.m. service. More information on both events can be found in this newsletter. Lastly, please keep our boys and our staff members in your prayers. I also ask that you pray for decision makers at DCFS—goodness should lead them to correct a hastily made and poorly considered decision.

As always, please know how grateful I am for the support you have always shown our boys and our mission. **Our transitional living program contract remains intact so we need your support now more than ever!**

Take Care,
Ann G. Deuel
Executive Director



Jamal Place works together . . .

it. Most of our kids do not have the benefit of a healthy family who can connect them to resources or help them figure out their problems. It is enormously frustrating to me that the attachment the boys develop with our staff mem-



to build strong performing teams!

“How Does Your Urban Garden Grow?”

The Jamal Place/St. Agatha community food pantries urban garden started with the volunteer services of Mike Graham and Jose Meija of **Landscape Concepts Management of Grayslake, Illinois** who rototilled a 5000 square foot lot located behind the Jamal Place Transitional Living Program. The lot, owned by the Archdiocese for Chicago, has been vacant for many years. It is located immediately west of the Presentation Food Pantry which distributes food to many neighborhood residents every Saturday morning. Many of St. Agatha’s community food pantries’ recipients have trouble getting to grocery stores—age, transportation and health issues are barriers for many.

Fresh produce is often lack-

ing in food pantry distributions, so the idea of using the space to grow fresh fruits and vegetables seemed to be a good one. On Saturday, May 15, 2010, Ann Deuel, the executive director of Jamal Place, worked with group home and transitional living program residents to plant the garden. David Polsky, Deena Heller, along with Linda and daughter Taylor (last names not yet discovered) arrived to help from a VolunteerMatch.com solicitation. Residents and volunteers worked together to plant: cabbage, cucumbers, tomatoes, green peppers, sweet corn, okra, lettuce, spinach, collards, beans and peas. Seeds and plants were donated by St. Agatha Church members and through the Chicago community gardens. Jamal Place

has donated strawberry and blueberry plants to be added to the garden. The May 15th planting group had limited gardening experience—but everyone enjoyed seeing the garden take shape. A number of the food pantry recipients offered their gardening advice and expressed their excitement at the eventual harvest.

Agency residents will tend to the garden throughout the summer. Not only will the garden provide fresh produce for those in need, but it will be used as a life skill group for the boys and young men of Jamal Place. Jamal Place is happy to be contributing community members!



Preparing the garden lot for planting.

Celebrate 15 Years with Jamal Place, Inc.!



Come join the fun in Douglas Park!

Won't you join the Jamal Place family as we celebrate 15 years of providing group home and transitional living services to boys and young men in the North Lawndale community? Won't you help us raise much needed funds when we walk and picnic in

Douglas Park on Saturday, June 26, 2010.

Our celebration kicks off at 9:00 a.m. with the walk registration. Yoga and stretching moves led by Jamal Place's dynamic administrative assistant, Christian Totty follows at 9:30 a.m. to prepare for the 10:00 a.m. run/walk or stroll around beautiful Douglas Park.

Jamal Place, Inc. is in transition (please read the Letter from the Executive Director for details). Jamal Place

needs a huge turnout of people and a strong pledge response to guide the changes which are occurring and to potentially be used as a media opportunity to support the agency's work. This walk is our last fundraiser of each fiscal year and it remains particularly important this year as child welfare agencies across the state face the ninth year of the past 11 years with no cost of doing business increase to our state contracts. Any transformative change Jamal Place faces will require emotional, spiritual and financial support in increased measure.

These are tough economic times. Everyone is feeling the pinch of the current recession—Jamal Place has been no exception. You can help Jamal Place end the fiscal year on a positive note by

bringing a team of people to the walk and picnic. Pass along the pledge sheet found in this newsletter to your friends and family. The fundraising goal is \$25,000—together we can achieve and exceed this goal so that the agency's important work can continue. If you believe that inner city boys and young men need caring homes and a safe place to heal from abuse and neglect—then make a commitment to join us on June 26th in beautiful Douglas Park. Find your gym shoes. Bring your friends. Plan on spending a great day with old and new friends. If you can't walk, plan to spend a beautiful summer day with Jamal Place—the picnic begins after the walk at 11:00 a.m. with good food, fun games and great people. Make a statement and a difference in support of the youth of Jamal Place, Inc!



Jamal Place, Inc.

15th Annual Anniversary Picnic and Walkathon

Who: YOU!	Picnic Begins Immediately Following the Walk	How: Sign up individually or get a team together!
What: Participate In the Jamal Place, Inc. 15th Anniversary Picnic and 5K Walkathon	Where: Beautiful Douglas Park (Across from 1335 S. California Avenue, Chicago, IL 60608)	T-Shirts provided at the event for contributors donating \$30 or more toward the walkathon.
When: Saturday, June 26, 2010 Registration: 9:30 a.m. Walk: 10:00 a.m.	Why: To support a great organization helping boys and young men have a chance at success!	T-Shirt Sizes and contributions must be received by 6/15/2010 for processing.

Team: _____ Co-Captain: _____ Co-Captain: _____

Name	Address	Amount Pledged	Attending Walkathon? Indicate Yes or No	Adult T-Shirt Size \$30 minimum pledge for T-shirt required S M XL 2XL 3XL

Contributions may be made to Jamal Place, Inc. and are tax deductible as allowed by law. Donations may be mailed to:
Jamal Place, Inc., c/o 1137 W. Taylor St., #163, Chicago, IL 60607

All contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law. A traveling trophy will be awarded each year to the team raising the most money and to the team with the greatest number of participants!

Loyola University & Jamal Place partner to combat the School- to- Prison Pipeline

Christian Totty
May 20, 2010

Last fall, Jamal Place began a partnership with Loyola University's Social Justice Advocates (SJA's). Once a week, Jamal Place youth and staff would travel north to Loyola's Lake Shore campus to meet with the SJA's, eat dinner, and learn about the social inequities that make it difficult for underrepresented students to be successful. Through art, critical analysis, and strong leadership demonstration, the SJA's were able to facilitate healthy and meaningful dialogue with Jamal

Place youth. From basketball to looking at juvenile justice statistics, to Open Mic Nights, and attending a discussion with Michael Eric Dyson, Claros and the SJA's ensured that the program and pedagogy be an enriching and engaging experience every step of the way.

The 10- week curriculum, "The Empowerment Pipeline: Interrupting and Resisting the School-to-Prison Pipeline" came to life during the fall of 2009 at a joint meeting

between two student-led groups. That conversation, concerning the disparities in the educational system & the lack of access to higher education of underrepresented students, sparked the beginning of a monumental leadership development program. After many months of diligent



Social justice and being "social"

work, the SJA's, under the leadership of Sharon Chia Claros (a staff member from the Department of Student Diversity and Multicultural Affairs at Loyola), have created a program that is committed to working with youth from various communities throughout the Chicagoland area, and inspiring individual and collective action towards breaking the school-to-prison pipeline through education, mentorship, self-reflection and empowerment.

As summer approaches, and plans for fall 2010 develop, we look forward to strengthening our partnership with Claros, and the Social Justice Advocates—Heart to heart.



Program Participants meet with Dr. Michael Eric Dyson.

"Thanking God (and you) in Front of The Entire Congregation"—Psalm 35

Please join Jamal Place residents, staff members and board members as we share a spiritual celebration of 15 years of doing God's work helping boys and young men succeed.

The celebration begins at 10:30 a.m. at St. Agatha Catholic Church located at 3147 W. Douglas Blvd in North Lawndale. The residents will help plan the service and help select the music. During these uncertain times, a time to give thanks and reflect will renew the spirit of the Jamal Place organization.

All faiths are welcome to attend. A cake and punch reception will immediately follow the service. Please mark your calendars and join Jamal Place as thanks are freely expressed for the kids, the work, the supporters and the faith of many over 15 years. If you need any additional information or directions, please contact Christian Totty at 773-638-2445.

Jamal Place would like to thank the following individuals, businesses and foundations for their financial and In-Kind support through 5/14/10 for Fiscal Year 2010 (July 1/2009-6/30/10)

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In Memory of Wilma Day

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In Memory of Helen Graham

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Mike & Karen Graham
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Thomas Graham
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In Memory of Briget Murray

Kathleen Brown

In Memory of Ron Payette

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In Memory of Norma Engelhardt

Kathleen Brown

In Memory of Ned Gauri

Kathleen Brown

Jamal Place makes positive changes in the lives of young men by providing superior residential care, individualized therapeutic programs, quality educational opportunities and by becoming an extended family resources for the youth the agency serves. As a result, Jamal Place helps young men become educated, caring and responsible citizens.

(K&A) THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS
 Danke Schön für Ihre Spenden
 bedankt

Save the Date!

Saturday, June 26, 2010

15th Annual Anniversary Picnic and Walkathon
Douglas Park
9:00 a.m. Stretch/9:30
Registration/10:00 Walk/ 11:00 Picnic

Sunday, July 11, 2010

15th Anniversary Celebration Mass
St. Agatha Catholic Church (All faiths welcome)
10:30 a.m.

Saturday, July 24, 2010

Board of Directors' Meeting
10:00 a.m.

Saturday, October 2, 2010

16th Annual Benefit Reception
Odyssey Cruise/Navy Pier
1-4 p.m.

Saturday, November 18, 2010

Community Thanksgiving Dinner
Transitional Living Program
6:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 11, 2010

16th Annual Tree Trimming Party
Jamal Place Group Home
1-5 p.m.

Jamal Place, Inc.

Incorporated; July 1993

Executive Director

Ann G. Deuel

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