

to **RESTORE**: re-store (*verb*) [ri-stawr, -stohr] to bring back to a state of **health**, soundness, or **vigor**.

A Newsletter for Restoration Academy in Fairfield, Alabama

Winter 2010

Learning about Satisfaction

My favorite part in the movie *The Blind Side* is when Leigh Anne Tuohy is laying in bed facing the audience with a tremendous smile. This comes after she provides Michael Oher a bedroom and his first ever bed. Her husband asks, "Does that smile have anything to do with Michael Oher?" She responds, "No. It has has everything to do with Michael Oher."

This scene illustrates the peace and satisfaction that we seek in life. Too often, we look in the wrong places or stay on the periphery of a God-honoring cause. There is no doubt, the Tuohys were already generous people, but God shows he is willing to bless us beyond what we can comprehend when we step out of our comfort zone. When we experience His satisfaction as depicted in the Tuohy's story, we ask ourselves "What took me so long?" or "How can I go deeper?". We are changed people.

When it gets right down to it, this is why ministries like Restoration Academy exist: so

"Truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father is doing..."
John 5:19

180 people showed up on a Saturday morning in January to do various projects in Fairfield in the cold rain. I told the crowd that gathered that cold, wet day that I believe people are being drawn to Fairfield because they sense God is clearly at work in this community. I shared the reason I believe this is reality: No **one** man or **one** institution can take the credit for what is happening.

Eight Fairfield ministries and institutions were present that day (Habitat for Humanity,



The Upton Family and senior DQ Woodruff

that God's people can respond to an overwhelming need in a tangible and personal way. People lend a hand to Restoration and experience a blessing God wants to give.

On behalf of the Board we say thank you and are appreciative of all you do. We remain ever committed to our mission and being good stewards of your generous resources. See you at the next luncheon and please bring a guest!

Sonny Culp

Learning about Service

Grace House, City Works, Miles CDC, The Dan-non Project, Restoration Academy, The Church of the Reconciler CEC, Christ Church). The focus of the projects accomplished are the objects of God's biased favor in the scriptures-- the fatherless, widows, elderly, orphans, etc.

It is clear that the transformation taking place in this community is a collective work of the Body of Christ. Well over 20 churches are involved in addressing our urban crisis. Restoration Academy is privileged to be a part of this movement where God clearly gets the credit.

Carl Lynn

RA Hoops Shoot to a New Level

The Restoration Academy boy's basketball program finished the 2009-2010 season strong with a 2nd place finish in the state tournament, a 22-1 overall regular season record and a ranking in the Birmingham Metro Top 10 (which includes mostly 6A teams). The bulldogs fought hard to overcome many obstacles in their season and have developed into young men along the way.

Likewise, the girls program led by first season coach Jason Williams, finished over .500 in conference play and made it to the regionals of the state playoffs. The boys JV team and head coach Jason Simms won the championship in their division with an undefeated conference record as well.

The Alabama Independent School Association announced its new classifications for the next two years. With its continued growth, RA moved up to class 2A. "It is another



Restoration Academy honored Senior Basketball Athletes on January 30th: Dequarius Woodruff, Jessica Smith and Demarcus Bloxom.

indication of the continued growth at RA," said Dewayne Coker, RA Athletic Director. "It means our level of competition will be even better. But we don't shy away from tougher competition. We strongly believe the better the competition-the better our program," Coker said.

"We have come a long way in what seems to be a short time," said Coker.

"We went 0-10 our first year competing in 8 man football. By the third year, we were winning 8 man championships. Since the move to 11 man football, the team improved its record to 6-4 and made the playoffs in only its second year. We went from an average Christian School basketball program to a program that is absolutely dominating the AISA."

"We can't wait to see what happens next with RA athletics."



Tip off at the last game of the season on January 30th.

Learning a New Song

Restoration Academy students are receiving the best our city can offer again. Dr. Daniel Cason, an ordained minister, concert pianist and a former high school music teacher, is teaching music and directing the student choir. Dr. Cason received his formal education at the Cleveland Music School Settlement (Rainey Institute), the renowned Cleveland Institute of Music and USC. Dr. Cason is the Founder and Director of KIDS Inc. (KIDS Christian Music Center and KIDS Community School of the Arts). In addition, he feeds and clothes homeless monthly through his Bread of Life Food Pantry.

Diligent, responsible & well-behaved, these are only a few characteristics of a good student. But what does it mean to be a Restoration Academy student? I took it upon myself to interview a couple of RA seniors to ask what they think it takes to be eligible to meet the school's standards. Jessica Smith & Demarcus Bloxom; took time out of their busy schedules to sit down with me and give their explanation of an RA student.

"Faith, determination & skill is the key. You have to have faith in yourself as well as your teachers to succeed in your classes and future goals in life. Determination is definitely needed on the RA road, because you have to have the drive and discipline to keep your mind in the right place to take on all of the tasks that are thrown at you. Even though you are going to have the support of the staff and of course the support of your parents, you still have to have determination to keep yourself going." stated Jessica.

"I feel that it is God's will for me to be at Restoration Academy to help establish a Christian 'Julliard School of Music' in Birmingham."

The RA choir held their Christmas concert at the chapel at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in December. The high school choir and elementary students are preparing for the upcoming spring concert which will also feature a CD release in late April. To book the choir for performances please contact Ty Williams at etywilliams@aol.com.

Ty Williams

The RA Student

Students at most schools lack many of these characteristics. A lot of schools don't even try to motivate their students to do better and be a leader in the world. Restoration can be difficult but we all agree that we have an amazing staff who push the students along the way no matter what grade level. Demarcus Bloxom (one of our leaders on the varsity football team) stated: "It takes a lot of will-power to have the desire to get your work done, get to class on time, make good grades and juggle sports all in one. You have to stay focused and make sure you don't start 'sippin on that gasoline' as Mr. Lynn would say."

Sure school gets stressful and sometimes a little overwhelming but my fellow students should not be alarmed. Just remember to keep the faith, stay focused and determined, keep up the good work and go for the Gatorade not the gasoline!

Lauren Smith, Senior Class 2010

LEARNING: learning (*noun*)
modification of a behavioral tendency by experience

KNOWLEDGE *(noun)*

the condition of knowing something gained through experience

Learning about Life



Carl Lynn and recent RA graduate Jerime Griffin at our Focus on Fairfield event in January.

“When I was at Restoration you guys taught me a lot about God and about the Bible, but it wasn’t until I left Restoration and made a lot of mistakes that I really started to learn about life.”

These words were recently spoken to me in our parking lot by a young man who used to go to the school. We’ll call him Robert. About six years ago Robert was voted “student of the year” at RA due to his academic success, his character and his attitude. Then surprisingly the following year he got caught up in a series of bad behavior issues and his attitude became horrible.

At the time of print (February 23rd) we have raised 157 scholarships of the 200 we must raise this year. Please remember that the scholarship program is the primary source of funding for the school.

Most of our students pay something to

After several meetings with his mother and no results we had to expel him. We lost track of Robert after that, only hearing sparse reports from people who knew him. But then he showed up in our parking lot with a big smile on his face and gave me a hug.

He told us he had a job working with mentally handicapped kids. He was married and owned a house in Avondale. He told us he was in church.

I praise God that this kid, who self-admittedly made a series of bad mistakes, was able to find God when he hit rock bottom. I praise Him that Restoration helped lay a

foundation for Robert that he was able to return to when things got the worst. And I’m incredibly grateful to God that even though we had to expel this young man he still felt loved by us and he still believed that RA was a place he could return to and call home.

Robert’s story is a reminder to all of us that people don’t fall through the proverbial “cracks.” God’s hands are wide and vast and they surround all of us as His children no matter how far and fast we might try to run from Him.
Ben Sciacca

Scholarships

be here but in no way does this cover what it costs us to educate these children. We must raise \$5,000 per year to educate one student. For more information on how you can help, please contact Ty Williams at etywilliams@aol.com or 205.785.8805 ext 106.