

FAITH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Our Mission is to give hope to disadvantaged children by showing them God's unconditional love and by guiding them into becoming whole persons – socially, intellectually, physically and spiritually



November 2008

SAVE THE DATE!

A Gospel Christmas Celebration

December 6, 2008
2pm & 7pm

*It's a Benefit Concert for
Ruby Bridges
Elementary School!*

Sponsored by
Daughters of Grace &
First Baptist Church, Alameda

Lots of great talent for a
GREAT cause...you won't
want to miss this!!!

For ticket and info, contact
the Faith Network office.

Tickets:
\$10 suggested donation

THANKS TO

- **Caltrans** for delivering two computers, a file cabinet and bookshelf to Westlake Middle School's Family Resource Center.
- **Safeway Inc** for donating pumpkins to kindergarten classes at Emerson Elementary kindergartners.

CONTACT

Interested in volunteering?
Contact us:

Email: info@faith-network.com
Phone 510/836.5100
Fax 510/836.5105

Student Snapshot

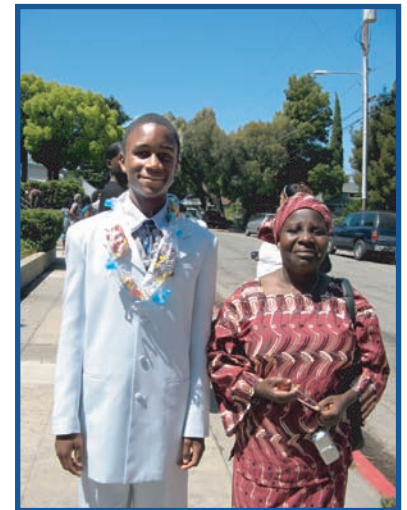
by Nancy Branagh, FN Volunteer Coordinator at Burckhalter Elementary

At six, **Abraham** and his aunt made the long journey from Liberia to Oakland, CA. Now at eleven, Abraham is a middle school student at the Oakland Charter Academy. Last year, he was a top student at Burckhalter Elementary School, scoring in the 90% on his Star Tests. During his Burckhalter tenure, Abraham would leave his east Oakland apartment each morning at 6:30 and ride two busses across town (transferring mid-way) so he could arrive at school by 8:30.

The people and programs of Faith Network have crossed paths with Abraham several times. As a fifth grader, Abraham was involved in a Faith Network sponsored writing project and his writing coach was continually blown away by his intelligence and rich soul. Abraham says of the experience, "My writing improved a lot. My vocabulary improved. I learned to add sensory details to my work and to stay on topic."

This past summer Abraham was one of many Oakland students who, thanks to a generous donor, had their first summer camp experience at Mission Springs in Scotts Valley. When you ask him about his time there, his face lights up, "It was so awesome. It was the best summer I ever had! My favorite part was the people. They were inspirational and very caring." I asked Abraham what Faith Network means to him. He said, "Well, the first word is faith. Faith involves people who encourage you to be who you are and to do your best. Faith Network has really cool and nice people to help students when they need it most."

While many of Oakland's inner city students perform way below benchmark, there are also the Abrahams who excel at an outstanding level. They, too, have obstacles to overcome and challenges to face. Without various forms of help, they can easily fall through the cracks. Faith Network has made a commitment to help Abraham feel confident that not only will he make it into a top college but that he will also continue to be an inspiration wherever he goes.



Abraham and his Aunt
at Burckhalter's graduation

Giving Update

Since July 1, the beginning of our fiscal year, the follow report indicates total contributions received compared to budgeted donations.

Giving Goal, July 1 - Dec. 31:	\$257,240
Received through Oct. 24:	\$93,000

Giving needed by Dec. 31: \$173,940

Thank you for your faithful response to our budgetary need. Whatever you send, large or small, will make a difference!



RANDY ROTH

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear friends,

Today while on the playground of one of our schools I heard a female student call my name, "Mr. Roth, Mr. Roth." I turned but couldn't detect where the voice was coming from. "Mr. Roth," she called again, and this time I realized that sound was coming from a girl sitting alone on a bench by the fence. As I approached she said, "Mr. Roth could you please help me with my biography. I have to write four paragraphs."

I sat beside her and noticed that she had written one sentence: "My name is Elizabeth." "Elizabeth...that's a lovely name; does it mean something special?" "My mom told me that she gave me the name that was in her heart." "So, Elizabeth, what else do you want to say about yourself? Do you have brothers and sisters?" "I have 3 sisters and 1 brother, but my brother is dead," she answered. (Pause) "That's so sad. How did your brother die?" "I don't want to talk about it," she blurted with a sense of finality, and then dropped her head. Crocodile tears began rolling down her cheeks. It was as if her brother had died yesterday. The pain rushed to the surface, the wounds still fresh. For several minutes we sat together in silence.

Undoubtedly Elizabeth's brother suffered a violent death. Many of our Oakland kids have seen relatives and neighbors murdered in cold blood. One child saw her grown cousin shot in the face and came to school the next day. She didn't stop shaking all week.

My heart goes out to children like Elizabeth who come to school emotionally traumatized. I'm reminded once again that the kids we serve need more than academic support. They need a listening ear, a caring heart. Just to know someone is in their corner cheering them on can make all the difference.

Might that someone be you?

Sincerely,

Health4Kids Food Bagging

Health4Kids has started off the new school year with an amazing group of volunteers bagging food for our kids at the Alameda County Community Food Bank. The Food Bank was able to add more schools to our outreach, almost doubling our volume...1300 bags! Our committed, hard working volunteers accomplish this task in a little over two hours. We are thrilled that so many more children are taking food home for the weekend, and we are having a wonderful time together as we labor and pour our sweat equity (literally!) into such an important, fruitful project. **We hope some of you reading this will consider joining us occasionally.** It's a great opportunity and your help would be greatly appreciated. You can contact me by phone 510-579-0521 or email charlottemz@gmail.com, to find out the dates and times we meet. - *Charlotte Martinez*



THANKS FROM

- We just finished up with Kaiser's PEACE SIGNS' presentation for the parent community and it was a wonderfully attended performance. We thank you for making it possible for our school and families to have this thought provoking experience.

- *Principal Tracye Washington, MLK Jr. Elementary*

- On behalf of the Emerson Elementary School student body, I am writing this note of thanks for the backpacks filled with school supplies for our students. Your thoughtfulness will help brighten the lives and spirits of many of our students.

- *Verna Springer, After School Program Director*

STAFF

- Randy Roth, *President*
- Jocelyne Birren, *Grant Writing*
- Chelsea Boniak, *Executive Administrator*
- Norman Brooks, *Director Science Horizons*
- Rebecca Buckley, *Associate Director*
- Natasha Hicks, *Volunteer Director*
- Charlotte Martinez, *Director Health4Kids*
- Carolyn Piraino, *Director Excel Reading Clinics*

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