

“Working here
inspires me to
do more and
be better.”

Nicole A. is a Youth Advocate in CV's Harlem Justice Program. Once on probation herself, now Nicole helps other kids make better choices.

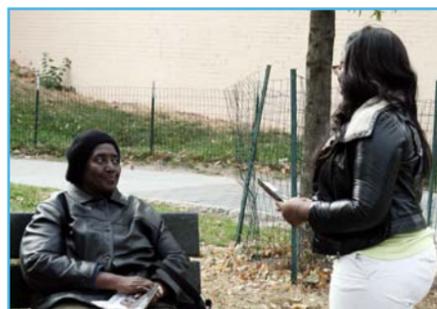
Probation Opened a Door

At 24, Nicole A. is supporting her mother and younger siblings. She works as a Youth Advocate at CV's Harlem Justice Community Program teaching job skills like networking and interviewing to youth on probation. Nicole identifies with the youth she serves because just two years ago, Nicole was on probation herself.

Nicole and four siblings were raised in Harlem by her single mother. She didn't take school seriously and preferred the streets. “If I was in school, I wouldn't have had much time to be bothered with all the nonsense that got me into trouble,” Nicole says, reflecting on her past choices.

One of the things that helped Nicole to change was the Harlem Justice Program, which helps older youth on probation get on track. *[Read more about the program in the Outcomes Corner on page 2.]* Nicole didn't

really know what to expect, but after the first day, “the conversation was so deep that I had to come back,” she said. The program motivated her to take responsibility for her own actions. Nicole remembers, “every time I went home, I had something that I was proud of to share with my family.”



In the Harlem Justice Program, youth learn that helping their community is an important part of putting past mistakes behind them.

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2013 Nonprofit Excellence Gold Prize Winner

We are delighted to share with you the news that The Children's Village was chosen as the first-place winner in the New York Community Trust-New York Magazine Nonprofit Excellence Awards. We congratulate our staff and trustees for this honor.

Over the past nine months, a 33-member judging committee whittled down the 62 applicants to 10 semifinalists and 6 finalists. Winners were selected on excellence in eight areas of nonprofit management:

- ♦ focus on results;
- ♦ financial management;
- ♦ diversity & responsiveness;
- ♦ communications;
- ♦ fundraising;
- ♦ governance structure;
- ♦ human resources;
- ♦ IT practices;

“The techniques of the best-run nonprofits offer lessons to other nonprofits as well as small businesses across New York,” said Lorie Slutsky, President of The New York Community Trust.

“We are enormously proud to be in the company of all of the exemplary organizations who have been recognized through this award,” said Jeremy Kohomban.



Center: Paul Jenkel, Chairman of the Board, and Jeremy Kohomban, President and CEO, accept the Nonprofit Excellence Award.

Photo by Kate Lord

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About The Village

Founded in 1851, The Children's Village works in partnership with families to help society's most vulnerable children so that they become educationally proficient, economically productive, and socially responsible members of their communities.

Debating Descartes in Harlem

Craig Williams always dreamed of going to college, but at 55, he had given up his dream. Now Craig is one of 30 classmates in CV's Harlem Clemente Course, part of a national program that provides high level humanities courses free of charge to disadvantaged adults. The program is taught by top university professors, including Columbia professor David Kittay, who brought the program to CV.

Stephanie Thompson and her son, Tairiq, are taking the Clemente Course together. "Mom and I have so much to talk about now," says Tairiq. Stephanie adds, "Professor Kittay is teaching us to debate, which we have a great time practicing at home—even over what to make for dinner!"



The Harlem Clemente Course is based on the Columbia Core Curriculum and classes are enriched by its students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Bard College recognizes the course by providing 6 college credits to qualifying students.



Photos courtesy of Richard Getler

Volunteers Raise \$130,000 for Westchester Teens

October is always a great month for CV and the runaway and homeless teens we serve. Volunteers run two events that, this year, raised \$130,000. The first event, the Sally Paddle Tennis Tournament, has been in existence for 33 years and attracts players from three states. Thank you to the event committee and in particular chairs Jo Rogers, Sharon Saunders, and Ward Doonan.

The Masquerade Gala, dubbed (by us) "The Best Masquerade Party in Westchester", is the brainchild of Armand Paganelli and Jim Timko. This event would not be possible without Silvio's Restaurant, the energetic event committee, and the hundreds of individuals and businesses who donate prizes and/or attended the event. Special thanks also to our music entertainment, the MasterCard Transactions and DJ Curtis Winchester. To see pictures, visit www.childrensvillage.org/masquerade.

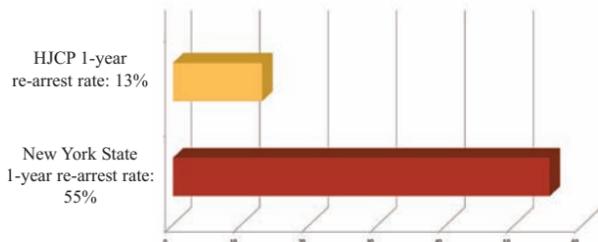


Social Impact - The Harlem Justice Community Program

Within one year of being arrested, 55% of New York State youth are rearrested. For those who participate in CV's Harlem Justice Program, that number drops to only 13%. On page one, you read about Nicole A., one of the 84 young adults in the program last year.

The program helps kids by giving them a track for being successful. Youth create professional portfolios, volunteer in community benefit projects, attend education courses, gain work skills, and learn how to use their time productively so they don't get into trouble.

One Year Re-Arrest Rates



*National rate of re-arrest within 2 years is 66% and 3 years is 75%.

The Shirt Off His Back

Giving the shirt off your back is not something most people take literally. But last month, on a Midnight Run to hand out food, clothing, and toiletries to the homeless, Chris S. did just that. "It's so cold out tonight," said Chris, a 16-year old CV resident, as he removed his sweatshirt and handed it to the shivering homeless man. With some initial hesitation, the homeless man took the shirt, wiggled it over his head, and set off into the night in Chris' bright blue sweatshirt.



What Mentoring Means - from Both Perspectives

Mentor: Madeline Taylor

It wasn't an easy decision. What do I have to offer? We come from such different backgrounds. What do I know about his experiences? He might wind up resenting me with my suburban values and my wealth. It would be so much better if I were a minority, spoke better Spanish, if we could share a joint culture. I went so far as to volunteer and then withdraw and then volunteer again. Finally I decided, I'm not perfect. Probably there are a million people better for this job, but they aren't coming forward.

**I am here.
I am willing.
I have space
in my life. I'm
going to
become a
mentor.**

My husband and I were assigned to a 16 year old boy. For the first couple of months we met on campus. We were like a couple of nervous kids on a blind date; anxious to like and be liked; worried that the conversation might stall. There were miscues and mistakes - An outing on a beautiful sunny day when Josiah announced that he was allergic to the sun. A breakfast picnic when I forgot to remind him not to eat before we got there.

Mostly though the talk flows easily and we find things we like to do together. Josiah has broadened my taste in movies; I've nudged him to get his Learner's permit. Baking a cake for his birthday celebration reminded me how satisfying it is to give something of yourself.

He is a sassy, smart kid who is so much more than his difficult past. Because of Josiah, I see the world a little differently.

The hordes of rowdy teenagers who crowd the subway everyday after school no longer seem so threatening. It is not clear which of us is getting more from this relationship.

I may not be perfect for the job. The decision was hard, but I am very glad I made it.



Josiah and Madeline at the NY Rangers Dog Walk in Riverside Park.

Mentee: Josiah A., 17 years old

In the little time that I've been with my mentors, Madeline and Joe, they have been nothing but supportive and caring. My mentors have taken me to Stone Barns, NYC, restaurants, and movies. All of these experiences that I shared with them were important to me, however the most significant was the time they celebrated my birthday.

My mentors took me to a restaurant for dinner and homemade dessert made by Madeline. I was extremely grateful for the time and effort they put into making my birthday so special, especially when Madeline found out my favorite kind of cake - vanilla and strawberry - and spent the whole morning trying to make the perfect cake for me.

Everybody in the restaurant sang for me when they brought out the cake with 17 candles in it. My mentors invited 3 of my favorite staff to my birthday dinner because they knew how much it would mean to me for them to be there.

**They
made my
birthday
so special.**

laughs and a good time that I will never forget.

I really appreciate everything my mentors have done for me. I'm excited for all the adventures yet to come.



A young man, his mentor, and his favorite cake.

**He is a sassy, smart
kid who is so much
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difficult past.**

**Because of Josiah,
I see the world a
little differently.**

Families are Our Partners

When asked how we at CV could improve our customer service, our Parent Council had a lot to say! "Don't believe everything you see in our case record—meet us as people first."

"Don't use jargon—we don't understand it and are embarrassed to admit it." "Don't judge us until you've walked in our shoes."

Some of what they said was hard to hear, but it made a lot of sense. So we enlisted them in helping staff understand their point of view.



**Don't use
jargon ...
Don't
judge.**

The Council, which consists of parents who have children in one of CV's programs, not only conducted trainings with staff, but also produced the poster shown here that now

hangs in every program office at CV. Learning to walk in parents' shoes is a continuing process, but we are grateful to our Parent Council for helping us along the way.

The Parent Council serves as a continuing reminder of the importance of including parents and families in the work we do at CV and doing it in a way that respects their individual needs.



CV's Parent Council helps staff learn to see things from parents' point of view.

Alliance Bernstein Plays Ball

On October 11, twenty volunteers from Alliance Bernstein spent a Day of Service on the Dobbs Ferry campus. Organized by Noah Simon, president of CV's Leadership Council and an employee of Alliance Bernstein, volunteers played ball, baked cookies, and spent time in the classrooms. As the day wrapped up, one of the volunteers said, "It's inspirational to see how happy these kids are despite misfortunes. It makes me appreciate how fortunate I am."



Learn more about becoming a mentor by visiting www.childrensvillage.org/mentor

News From The Village

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To volunteer, donate, or get involved visit our website or follow CV1851 on Social Media



Want to stay up-to-date on The Children's Village? Visit childrensvillage.org and click "Join our Mailing List". Know someone who may be interested in our work? Pass along this newsletter to spread the word!

THANKSGIVING THANKS TO YOU!

Thanks to hundreds of generous donors and volunteers, we were able to provide turkeys and food baskets for almost a thousand families throughout the New York area who otherwise would not have had Thanksgiving dinner. *Thank you!*

If you would like to help make the holidays special for our children, you can make a donation online at www.childrensvillage.org/donate or use the envelope provided. To give new toys or gifts for children or families, contact kmgallagher@childrensvillage.org or chudson@childrensvillage.org 914-693-0600 ext 1587.



The LaRon Landry Leadership for Life Foundation, Whole Foods Market, and The CV Leadership Council give away 500 turkeys to families at CV's Polo Grounds Community Center.



Ardsley school children hold food drive for CV families.



MasterCard, Morgan Stanley, and Pepsi volunteers pack food for CV families.



The NY Knicks and NY Liberty Players and Coaches serve Thanksgiving dinner to CV youth.

Probation Cont.

Nicole graduated from the program last year. She took the GED exam and passed the first time. She put her newly acquired job skills to good use, securing her youth advocate position and a second job in retail.

She says she's learned even more as an employee than as a client, "I see kids from my neighborhood coming in, and they remind me what the streets are really like. Working here inspires me to do more and be better."

Nicole's goal is to attend college and study early childhood development. She is very different from the shy and troubled teenager she was just a few years ago. Nicole says of her past, "It was a dumb decision, but a blessing in disguise because it brought me to CV. Something bad happened, but something great came out of it. I will lose, but I will not be defeated."

What Does a Father Look Like?

Jesse had no clue. He grew up in foster care and now he is about to become a father to his younger brother. Jesse has a job, his own apartment and is attending classes at Westchester Community College. He has done well for himself--now the challenge will be to do well for his little brother.

Jesse is part of CV's Fathers Program, which helps men who have never had a role model grow into fathers. "It's not about genetics," says Program Director Donald Somerville. "You have to have a picture of what a father looks like your mind."

Last month, the program held its first Father/Son camping trip. "It was about creating a shared experience and learning to depend on each other," said Somerville.

For Jesse, it was about teaching his brother that they could do things out of their comfort zone. When they drove up to the campsite it was dark. Jesse's brother said, "I'm not going out there with the bears! I'll sleep in the van!"

That was his cue: Jesse hopped out of the van, feigning confidence, and marched into the cabin. His brother followed just a step behind.

Jesse knows there will be tough times as they build a relationship together. He also knows that his little brother belongs with family, and that's him.

"It was about creating a shared experience and learning to depend on each other".

