

# Mockingbird Times



Building a world class foster care system while serving our neighborhood youth



August 2004

Foster Care and Homeless Youth Speak out Across the Nation

Volume IV, Issue 8

Visit us online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org)

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## Mockingbird Celebrates Successful Third Year

### PRINCESS HOLLINS



**FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF THE MOCKINGBIRD SOCIETY ARE CELEBRATING OUR 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY THIS MONTH.** The Mockingbird Society has done wonders for the community, especially for struggling youth who need jobs, or just need something productive to do. We have had many successes within the program and community for three consecutive years; through hard work and participation in our three programs: *The Mockingbird Times*, ASK-Y (Advocates for the System Kids and Youth) and the Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project (MFFCP).

The Mockingbird Society publishes a monthly newspaper, *The Mockingbird Times*, which employs 16 youth reporters who work between 5 and 20 hours per week and are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 per hour. *The Times* is designed and produced by youth with experience or some type of involvement with the Washington State Foster Care System and/or homelessness. Every edition is a collaboration of youth experiences, opinions and solutions on how to improve the foster care and homeless youth system. *The Mockingbird Times* is distributed inside *Real Change* (a community newspaper in Seattle) and is also available online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

The Mockingbird Society also facilitates the Advocates for System Kids and Youth (ASK-Y) Coalition, where youth, parents, foster care advocates and community members come together to discuss how to make policies work better for adolescents in the juvenile justice, foster care and homeless youth systems.

The Mockingbird Foster Family Constellation Project consists of six foster families who work closely together, centered around a hub house that provides their foster care children with unconditional and community based care, including family events and respite care. The Constellation Project is designed to build a stronger support system for foster care children, as well as parents. The University of Washington evaluation of the project is available online at [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org).

### MOCKINGBIRD BY THE NUMBERS..

**16** YOUTH ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED AS *MOCKINGBIRD TIMES (MBT)* REPORTERS .  
**60** YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE HAD WORK PUBLISHED IN THE *MOCKINGBIRD TIMES*.  
**260** ARTICLES HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY YOUTH REPORTERS.  
**\$60,000** HAS BEEN PAID TO YOUTH WRITERS OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS.  
**50** YOUNG PEOPLE WERE TRAINED BY MOCKINGBIRD AND ASK-Y TO ADVOCATE FOR FOSTER CARE AND HOMELESS YOUTH IN OLYMPIA.  
**30,000** COPIES OF THE *TIMES* ARE DISTRIBUTED EACH MONTH.  
**40** INTERVIEWS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS, LEGISLATORS AND OTHER YOUTH HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED BY MBT REPORTERS.  
**44** POEMS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN THE *TIMES* FROM KIDS ALL ACROSS THE NATION.  
**24** TRAININGS SESSIONS HAVE BEEN HELD WITH MBT REPORTERS AND THE *SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER* STAFF.  
**50** STATES RECEIVE COPIES OF THE *MOCKINGBIRD TIMES* EVERY MONTH.

The Mockingbird Society has made great progress over the last three years. To continue our progression, we need your support, so help us celebrate our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Anniversary by continuing to read and subscribe to the *Mockingbird Times* and provide support to our programs. We also invite you to our open house on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 3-6pm in our new location at 2100 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, Suite 350, Seattle, WA 98144

### REFLECTIONS FROM MOCKINGBIRD STAFF AND FRIENDS...

**Gina Hills, Managing Producer at the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer***, has been a participant in monthly meetings between the PI and *Mockingbird Times* staff for a little over a year. Hills enjoys meeting with reporters to edit and revise articles and has seen them gain tons of confidence. Hills would love to see the *Times* expand to hire more reporters and write more articles. Hills appreciates the influence that the paper has on the

community, stating, "The *Times* has helped educate the public about homelessness and foster care."

**Anthony Guess, Satellite Reporter**, has been working with the *Mockingbird Times* for six months now. Guess believes that if he didn't have the opportunity to work at Mockingbird, his testimony would have never been heard. "*Mockingbird Times* has allowed me to inform society about the foster care system by speaking out about my experience, while making a little money on the side."

**Shannon Barelo, Program Coordinator**, has been with the Mockingbird Society for one and a half years. Shannon loves the youth interaction, stating, "It is inspirational to see reporters gain confidence through their writing and interactions with professionals in the social service and journalism fields...[for example] it is a beautiful thing to see youth reporters interact with *Seattle PI* staff."

**Princess Hollins, Satellite Reporter**, has been involved with The Mockingbird Society for six months. Hollins states, "This experience has provided me with essential information about the foster care system, which had allowed me to share my knowledge with others in need of resources. I'm thankful that I have the opportunity to be part of something so positive. Thank you Jim Theofelis, Shannon Barelo and Mockingbird supporters!"

## Budget Cuts Hit Close to Home: SECTION 8 Program in Jeopardy

### COURTNEY KONIETZKO



**ON JULY 13, 2004, 150 PEOPLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF HOUSING** attended the Seattle City Council Forum about the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. This program helps people who are elderly, disabled, and/or very low-income secure safe, affordable housing in the private rental market—housing that is meant to be permanent or a stepping stone to a better paying job and self sufficiency. Renters on the Section 8 Program pay roughly 30% of their income towards rent, with federal HUD (Housing and Urban Development) funds paying the remainder.

HUD has announced funding cuts and the Bush Administration has proposed even more funding cuts, totaling \$1.6 billion to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. These are the biggest cuts to the program in thirty year, and will result in the loss of more than 250,000 vouchers nationwide and 5,190 vouchers here in Washington State. The number of individuals being affected is larger than 250,000 because a voucher sometimes covers more than one person.

Nationally there are over two million people on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. If these cuts go through, 30% of the Section 8 program will be affected by 2009. Seattle City Council Member Tom Rasmussen states, "12,000 people in our communities in Seattle alone depend on Section 8 subsidies to meet their month's rent." According to the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) website, SHA provides affordable housing to nearly 24,000 people in the city of Seattle. SHA house more than 8,000 residents in their public housing units and more than 14,600 residents through the HUD-subsidized Housing Choice Voucher Program. Approximately 8,400 SHA residents are children. .

What are people going to do? How can your own country kick you out on the streets? According to Rasmussen, Seattle already has "1,700 homeless people on the streets at any given night and another 3,700 in transitional housing (temporary housing, two-year stay on average, helps people prepare to live on their own)..." Crisis services are strained to the point of breaking.

It seems much more cost effective to house people permanently than to have people cycling through crisis services like the emergency room. Karyn Cooper, speaker at the July forum, states, "The vacancy rate in Seattle is at 7%. Many complexes are running at 10%...there is housing out there for people, it is ridiculous that the units should just sit there

SECTION 8 CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



## Letter from the Editor

JIM THEOFELIS

The Mockingbird Society marks its third anniversary with the same steadfast focus and determination in which it was born. We are dedicated to improving the current and future lives of young people involved in the foster care system as well as those who are homeless and street-involved. As we celebrate our accomplishments of the past three years, we want to reaffirm the philosophy that drives our work.

We will continue to stand by the philosophy of **Unconditional Care** as the guiding light for Washington and indeed the nation's foster/kinship care system. Unconditional Care demands that "all children and adolescents deserve a safe, warm, nurturing environment independent of age, ethnicity, economic status or behavior." We renew our commitment to the fundamental notion that we must take good care of the adults who take good care of children. **The first effective strategy of recruiting new families to provide foster care is to ensure that we are honoring and supporting current foster/kinship families.** A third philosophical position we hold is the mandate that all **services need to be culturally relevant** to the kids and families receiving such services. Children of color are over-represented in the foster care system and, in order to make any meaningful improvement, we must first accept the fact that institutional racism is a reality.

Finally, the Mockingbird philosophy is rooted in the principles of **youth development and leadership**, ensuring that young people are provided the training, support and opportunities to become effective agents of positive change. Youth involved with the Mockingbird Society participate in community meetings and forums, give public speeches and testimony and of course serve as youth reporters for the *Mockingbird Times*. Three years ago I met with three youth and two part time staff as we crafted the inaugural edition of the *Mockingbird Times*. Since then, young people have responded to the call to become leaders in the social justice effort to "build a world class foster care system."

Without question, our survival and success are due to the power, insight and involvement of the many young people who have come to Mockingbird. There are so many individuals and organizations who have supported The Mockingbird Society and the work we do. On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and the youth and families we serve, I want to express my appreciation for the tremendous support you have given us. I encourage you to join us at Mockingbird as we renew our commitment to ensuring that all of our children and youth are welcomed to the table of community and truly cared for—just as we would care for our own.

Jim Theofelis  
jim@mockingbirdsociety.org

## Charitable Planned Giving

*Mockingbird Staff recently interviewed Marie Trombley to learn about Charitable Planned Giving, a great way for individuals and organizations to make meaningful donations to non-profits. Here is what Trombley had to say:*

**MBT:** What is charitable planned giving?

**Trombley:** Every year millions of Americans donate money to their favorite charities. In fact, in 2000, about \$203.45 BILLION dollars was contributed to charitable causes. When we talk about a "planned gift" what we mean is the process in which a donor determines the most financially effective way to make a gift to a nonprofit organization. This can be as simple as making an annual donation by check, or as complex as creating a charitable remainder trust. The planning allows a donor to choose the gift form that meets their financial, charitable and estate planning goals.

**MBT:** How can it help non-profit organizations, particularly in the current political climate?

**Trombley:** Our American tax system is designed to encourage tax paying citizens to contribute to nonprofit organizations. The way this happens is that we receive "tax deductions (when yearly income taxes are filed)" for making charitable donations. The theory behind tax deductions is that the charitable contribution eases the financial burden on the government to provide funds for the work of the non-profit. The non-profit organization benefits from a planned charitable gift,

because it generates funds for its mission and services in the community.

**MBT:** How does it benefit those participating in the "giving"?

**Trombley:** In exploring charitable planned giving, donors have the opportunity to discover and articulate their personal and philanthropic values and goals. It may be that some donors initially choose to give because it provides them with certain tax incentives. For others, the reasons for giving may be based on a deep desire to give to the community in which they live; or a way of affirming their belief in the value of an education, or the commitment they have to their belief that all children should be given the best possible start early in life, or a desire to honor another who has struggled with an illness. The reasons and benefits are individual and precious to each donor.

**MBT:** How can our readers get involved?

**Trombley:** If you are interested in learning more about charitable planned giving, you can speak with your financial advisor, CPA, or attorney – you can contact Jim Theofelis of Mockingbird – or Marie Trombley, Watermark Asset Management, Inc. 1-888-860-0300.

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empty while there are 1,700 homeless people on our streets and over 10,000 people on waiting lists for housing!" Cooper goes on to say, "Section 8 is less expensive than constructing new units, it's faster and provides housing choice." Housing choice is important so low-income people are not segregated to low-income buildings or neighborhoods. Tom Tierney, Executive Director at SHA and Stephen Norman, Executive Director at King County Housing Authority, both agreed that some of the solutions proposed to deal with the funding cuts won't work. One solution is reducing rent levels for some of the homes and apartments offering Section-8 housing, which some say might backfire by limiting the choices where people have to live, creating, "concentrated pockets of poverty," according to Norman. Norman goes on to say that, "It is not appropriate, wise, or cost effective." Other solutions proposed are increasing rent and cutting the number of people on the program. Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell are both actively involved in finding housing alternatives.

Earlier in the year, the Seattle Housing Authority and the King County Housing Authority both had to temporarily freeze their waiting lists for the Section 8 program, which meant that no new vouchers would be issued. In Seattle there are currently there are 7,114 people on the SHA Section 8 waiting list. If nothing is done, and the Section 8 program is cut by 1.6 billion dollars, people already on the Section 8 program will lose their homes. According to SHA, the average income of a person on the Section 8 program is \$11,485 dollars a year. Norman reports that there are 8,200 households on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program in Seattle, which breaks down to over 21,000 individuals and over 10,000 children. 800 households in the Seattle area will lose their vouchers by 2005 if something is not done. 2,000 to 2,500 households will have lost vouchers by 2009.

For more information contact Emily at the Seattle Tenant's Union at (206) 722-6848 x102 or Emily@tenantsunion.org. They also have a great website full of information on your rights as a renter www.tenantsunion.org

## THANK YOU'S...

Northwest Children's Fund, Seattle Post Intelligencer, Kaki Dimock, Linda Lilevik, Aleta Kennedy, Denise Redinger, Lisa Revelle, Robin Walker, Graphica Designs, Mary Everett, Ron and Lauren Maier, Joy Smucker, Marlena Sessions at Work Force Development Council

**ABOUT US:** The Mockingbird Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to building a world class foster care system and improving the other systems that serve children and adolescents involved in homelessness and foster care. The *Mockingbird Times* is a monthly newspaper written and produced by youth who have experience in foster care and/or homelessness. All youth employees of Mockingbird Society are paid between \$7.50 and \$8.50 an hour. Additionally, youth from across the country submit articles, art work, poetry and are compensated up to \$25 per published piece. The *Mockingbird Times* has a monthly circulation of 28,000 copies being distributed across Washington and the U.S.A. Youth involvement is the key to the philosophy, values, and success of The Mockingbird Society and, as such, youth are involved in all aspects of organizational development and decision-making. Donations to The Mockingbird Society may be tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. No part of the *Mockingbird Times* may be reproduced without the written permission of The Mockingbird Society. All contents copyright 2004 The Mockingbird Society.

**A Mockingbird Inside Your Mailbox:** Make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable youth.

I want to support The Mockingbird Society

Donations may be tax deductible and all donors receive the *Mockingbird Times*. Enclosed, please find my check made payable to Mockingbird Society in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Suggested Donations:*

\$50 a year for one copy per month

\$100 a year for 5-15 copies per month

\$150 a year for 20-45 copies per month

\$200 a year for 50-100 copies per month

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, you may use my name on published donor lists.

Please bill me for the amount indicated.

My employer will match my gift; enclosed is my matching gift form.

I am interested in receiving information on the advantages of planned giving.

Please fill out and mail this form with a check or money order payable to:  
The Mockingbird Society, 2100 24th Ave South Suite 350, Seattle WA 98144

## MEET OUR STAFF

**Executive Director**

Jim Theofelis

**MFFCP Coordinator**

Shannon Barelo

**Administrative Assistant**

Lauren Frederick

**Staff Reporters**

Dennis Fisher, Courtney Konietzko, Darius Reynolds

**Satellite Reporters**

Shay Deney, J.Eboh, Rico Evans, Ashley Grant, Anthony Guess, Jamica Henderson, Princess Hollins, Echo Speed, Hollis Riggins, Shakura Felder, Misty Cook

**Contributing Writers**

Joyce Camacho

**Volunteers**

Anna Trombley, Kirsten Hansen-Day, Aleta Kennedy, Denise Redinger

# Guatemalans Provide New Definition of Wealth

ANTHONY GUESS



**HAVE YOU EVER WATCHED THOSE INFOMERCIALS ABOUT KIDS IN OTHER COUNTRIES** who live in really bad areas, and can't find food, or even go to school? I always thought that I would like to help, but I was unsure how. Well it seems like I found a needle in a haystack. A non-profit organization called Global Visionaries (GV) has been taking teens from different schools, and different racial ethnic, and economic backgrounds, to Guatemala for the past seven years to open their eyes to different cultures and help them have an understanding of how their ecological footprint affects the whole world. One example of this is the US using more water than any other country. The teens involved in GV get to choose how they want to help: the choices are construction, Common Hope (social visits to homes), and/or work in the hospitals.

I was fortunate to go on the trip this summer. It was the most profound experience I have ever had. I realized that there aren't a lot of machines in Guatemala, so everything is done by hand. Also, what we call poor (in the US) doesn't come close to what is considered poor in Guatemala. In the morning I worked with the construction team for four hours, and my group built a school in Hato, located 5 miles from Antigua. In the afternoon I attended language school for three hours. After school we had the rest of the day free.

At the end of the trip we were asked two questions: the first question was what have we learned and what will we be taking back with us to the states. I replied that

we take things for granted and show no appreciation at all. What I'll be taking back with me is a more in-depth understanding about the world as a whole. The other question was would I ever come back? My response was a highly enthusiastic "yes." I'm going back after my senior year and will be staying six months; I'm also on the youth board. This allows me to help plan the next trip.

Here is one piece of advice: if you feel a great burning desire to make a difference, check around your community for organizations that have partnerships with other countries and try to get involved. You can always donate supplies to Global Visionaries. I'm sure that villages like Hato, where it seems like all love and hope has run out would cherish the supplied items. A wise and spiritual woman once said "If you find it in your heart to care for somebody else, you will have succeeded"-Maya Angelou.

People all over the world view the USA as the richest country, possessing great material wealth, but after spending some time in Guatemala I would have to disagree. The ones who are poor and need a lot of assistance are us as US citizens. For instance, we are rude to each other and don't seem to care. When we see each other we don't even say hello; saying hello can be the ice breaker for an interesting conversation.

Another example is the 9-11-01 heart-breaking event. After it took place many US citizens distrusted people who looked Arabic. Unconsciously it seems like the US traveled back 50 to 60 years. For example the airport security is now overly suspicious of people of color, and racism freely flows from people's mouth and actions. Furthermore we always complain about not having transportation or not feeling like going to school or work. Overall we are very culturally centered, and we tend to

let the little things keep us from engaging in one another's company.

In 1996, the longest civil war in Guatemalan history had ended. The war was between the poor and the rich. Surprisingly enough, the United States played a major role, supplying the wealthy people of Guatemala with weapons and permission to do whatever they wanted. The war left 150,000 dead and 50,000 missing. What makes this war so devastating is the fact that the Guatemalans had nowhere to run except to the hillsides, because of fear of the army and the guerrillas. If they were captured by either the army or the guerrillas they were tortured and killed.

Despite the US involvement in this tragic event, Global Visionaries has been taking teens to Guatemala for the past seven years and not once have the participants been treated disrespectfully. Guatemalans are polite and at peace with themselves and each other. Even though most of the Guatemalans wake up to 10-15 hours of work per day, they go on time and work diligently for they know what will happen if they don't.

A man of great value once said, "Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value"-Albert Einstein. We as US citizens can't change our living conditions, but we can change the way we treat each other and become "richer." Global Visionaries is one organization I found that's making a difference, I'm sure that there are a lot more out there trying to do the same. For more information about the GV program check out [www.global-visionaries.org](http://www.global-visionaries.org).

Information about Guatemalan history was found at [www.latinamericanstudies.org/guatemala/massacre.htm](http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/guatemala/massacre.htm) and <http://www-app4.wa.gov/contest/nr2/130/amountused.html>.

## How to Take Action in Preventing Child Abuse

HOLLIS RIGGINS



**IT SEEMS LIKE DSHS NEEDS TO DO A BETTER JOB MONITORING FOSTER PARENTS.** Lately, when you turn on the evening news, all you hear is how foster parent Ronald Young is being charged with 44 accounts of child molestation and exploitation, or when you are chatting with friends someone brings up the topic of Julie Dubravetz, who was arrested on charges that she dragged her 5-year old foster child 10-feet with her car. All too often you hear stories of how state certified foster parents have neglected or abused a child in their care, and it seems like nothing is being done to prevent it.

Part of the reason that DSHS cannot prevent child abuse is that they may not know all that is happening in the home, because very few come forward with information. Many children will not speak up on their own behalf for fear of retaliation, or a fear that no one will believe them. It is up to us as a community to speak out on the child's behalf. You don't have to be a social worker to help. Here is a list of things you can do to help prevent child abuse, by just being the friend, family member, or neighbor that you are. Some of the things you can do are:

**Support programs that help support families.** Parent education, community centers, respite care services and substance abuse treatment programs help to protect children by addressing circumstances that place families at risk for child abuse and neglect. If you're looking for some local programs to support, check out the 2100 building located on 24<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. It is filled with programs like Youth in Focus, The Mockingbird Society, Rainer Scholars, Northwest Children's Fund, New School Foundation, WACAP, Treehouse, YMCA Independent Living Program, and Farestart that help give youth and their families support. There are also some national programs that you can support including the Casey Family Program ([www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org)) and the National Children's Alliance ([www.nca-online.org](http://www.nca-online.org)).

**Report suspected abuse and neglect.** Some states require everyone to report abuse or neglect. Whether or not you are mandated by law to report child abuse and neglect, doing so may save a child. **If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call the police or 1-866-ENDHARM.**

**Spread the word.** Help educate others in your community about child abuse and neglect. Ask if you can leave a stack of brochures at your local public library, recreation or community center, or other public place. You can also team up with organizations like National Clearing House ([www.nccanch.afc.hhs.gov](http://www.nccanch.afc.hhs.gov)) or Child Abuse Prevention Network ([www.child-abuse.com](http://www.child-abuse.com)) who already have brochures.

**Strengthen the fabric of your community.** Know your neighbors' names and the names of their children, and make sure they know yours. Give stressed parents a break by offering to watch their children.

Finally—and most important: if you are a parent, remember that prevention starts at home. Take time to re-evaluate your parenting skills. Be honest with yourself—are you yelling at your children too much or hitting them? Do you enjoy being a parent most of the time? You can find a list of good places to take classes at [www.puttingkidsfirst.org](http://www.puttingkidsfirst.org). Getting help when you need it is an important part of being a good parent. If you would like more information or tips on preventing child abuse, you can visit [www.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.dshs.wa.gov).

To get a better perspective of how everyday people can help, I interviewed 19 yr. old "Polly (name has been changed)" who has lived in an abusive foster placement almost all of her life.

**Hollis:** How long were you in the abusive placement?

**Polly:** I was put in that foster placement in 1991 when I was 5 years old. I finally left in 1999 because of a fight between my foster parent and me. She called DSHS and said she had enough of me and to come pick me up. I was 13.

**Hollis:** What was it like for you living in that placement?

**Polly:** I didn't like it and wanted to leave. I would get in trouble everyday for things like using my sister's blanket

or leaving a sweater out. She used to punish me by hitting me, making me clean out the garage, or making me clean out the entire house by myself!

**Hollis:** Did you ever try to get help? If so what happened?

**Polly:** Yes, when I was 9 I told my teachers and my school counselors but no one believed me. They said it was because I was probably misbehaving. They didn't start to believe me until I was around 11, and even then they didn't do anything.

**Hollis:** What could someone who knew about your situation have done to help?

**Polly:** The teachers and the counselors could have come and done an investigation or told CPS so they could take me out of that home.

**Hollis:** Do you feel that the DSHS/Foster Care system does a good job of monitoring foster parents? Why or why not?

**Polly:** I think it depends on who your caseworker is. Some do a better job than others.

**Hollis:** In what way were you abused?

**Polly:** She (foster mom) would hit me if I did something she didn't like even if it wasn't necessarily bad. She would tell me I was ugly and say things like I would never amount to anything.

**Hollis:** What advice do you have for someone who may be in your situation right now?

**Polly:** I would tell them to get help by speaking up. If people don't believe you just keep being persistent.

CHECK OUT ECHO SPEED'S UNDOING RACISM EXPERIENCE IN OUR EXCITING BONUS ARTICLE SECTION, LOCATED ONLINE AT [WWW.MOCKINGBIRDSOCIETY.ORG](http://WWW.MOCKINGBIRDSOCIETY.ORG)

## Barista Program Blends Hope For Homeless Youth

J. EBOH



WHEN PEOPLE THINK OF THE PHRASE "UNIQUE BLEND" in regards to coffee they might start thinking of Starbucks jargon, like "Tall Mocha Latte" or "Venti Tazo Tea" or "Grande Espresso." But today I am going to introduce you to a different (and far less confusing) kind of blend. It doesn't have anything to do with a coffee bean—at least not entirely. What I am talking about is hope and homelessness, two concepts that usually never go together.

The "Java Jobs" Youth Barista training program in Seattle combines these two concepts. Java Jobs is headed by a partnership between Youthcare and Farestart, and was started in July of 2003. In September of 2003 they started accepting participants. The two major goals of the program are employment and education for homeless youth. This is how they provide hope to young people facing homelessness.

On the education side, the program provides support and incentives to the participants for completing goals like enrolling in a G.E.D program, community college or a certificate program. When youth enter the program they are given a basic skills test. Their results are used by the program to determine what skills they have and what they need to improve. Once their needs are determined, they are provided with tutors to help them improve those academic areas that need attention. If by the end of the program they have made improvement on their test scores, they are rewarded with a monetary incentive.

In terms of employment, the program offers eight weeks of job training, so that participants can acquire jobs as baristas upon completion of the training. Baristas are the people at cafés and coffee houses that prepare and serve coffee.

The program offers this kind of training because they believe that it's an accessible job field for the age group of the youth participants.

Participants begin by learning about the history of coffee as well as other things like workplace hygiene and the basics of being a barista. They are then given the chance to practice their newfound skills in the real world. First they get to work in the Farestart café, located off of Rainer Avenue in the south end of Seattle. This convenient location allows participants to work in a building where they can access services that can help them on the path towards self sufficiency. The café is also located in a low traffic part of town so that participants can develop their skills without feeling overwhelmed. The next step is moving to a coffee cart in the downtown public library where they can put their matured skills to work.

Another advantage of the program is that while youth are training they can earn monetary stipends. If they complete the program, participants receive six-hundred dollars in stipend funds. In addition, they can continue to earn up to four-hundred dollars in stipends after the program if they complete goals like opening a bank account or obtaining a job and keeping it for at least three months. All of this is done not only to help the clients financially but also to encourage them to take steps in improving their lives. Since the program works exclusively with homeless youth they also work with youth on finding housing—be it in a shelter, one of Youthcare's housing programs or other transitional housing programs.

The program maintains a drug free environment. If a participant is struggling with addiction they are given referrals to programs that can help them. This program works and supports youth while challenging them to face and take responsibility for issues in their lives that interfere with their employability. Java Jobs offers a great opportunity for youth who might usually find it difficult to get job training and experience. Through their determination to help youth, Java Jobs gives a whole new meaning to the concept of "unique blend."

## Options for Families Needing Extra Support: CHINS/ARY Petitions

SHAKURA FELDER



THE MOCKINGBIRD SOCIETY AND THE CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE SPONSORED A FORUM in Seattle, Washington about the At Risk Youth (ARY) and Children in Need of Services (CHINS) petitions. General information was provided about the two petitions and the requirements for filing.

The purpose of an At Risk Youth (ARY) Petition is to receive assistance from the juvenile court in order to maintain the care, custody and control of the child and to assist in the resolution of family conflict, after alternatives to court intervention have been attempted. The purpose of a Child In Need of Services (CHINS) Petition is to obtain a court order mandating placement of the child in a residence other than the home of his/her parent because: a serious conflict between the parent and child that cannot be resolved by delivery of services to the family during continued placement of the child in the parental home, and reasonable efforts have been made to prevent the need for removal of the child from the parental home.

Although the two petitions are similar, they differ depending on who can file the petition(s) and what the petitions provide. For example, the ARY petition can only be filed by parents or legal guardians. Unlike the ARY petition, the CHINS petition can be filed by parent(s), legal guardians, youth, and DSHS social workers. Both services aim to provide assistance with runaways, substance abuse, and youth who are out-of-parental control, through intervention with the juvenile court. The following is information about how to apply for both petitions:

1. Contact Family Reconciliation Services for a family assessment.
2. Complete a petition and other forms. Forms include: ARY\CHINS Notice and Order to Show Cause for

Hearing, Declaration of Service, Case Assignment Form, and Identification Information Form. Take the completed forms and the family assessment to the Clerk's Office to be filed. A legal number and a court date will then be provided.

3. Deliver a set of copies to the Office of Public Defense to make sure that a public defender is appointed to represent the child.

4. Have someone other than the petitioner, particularly someone who is 18 years of age or older to serve the child with the petition.

Check out the following resources for more about how to file a petition: Juvenile Courthouse (Seattle) at 206-296-1134 or 296-1135; Regional Justice Center (Kent) at 206-205-2578 or 206-205-2635 or Family Reconciliation Services at 1-800-562-5624

Our bonus articles section on [www.mockingbirdsociety.org](http://www.mockingbirdsociety.org) has more information on filing these petitions, including Hollis Riggins piece on the history behind the ARY/CHINS petitions, frequently asked questions about the petitions and an in-depth interview with Public Defender Linda Lilevik.



## POETRY CORNER

JOYCE CAMACHO

## Movie Review: Moore Wakes America Up

COURTNEY KONIETZKO

"The people who like Moore are the ones who have also noticed that the Emperor is naked and who welcome a voice brave enough to say it openly. The ones who dislike him are the ones who have some kind of investment in the fineness of the Emperor's raiment." - [www.kuro5hin.org](http://www.kuro5hin.org)

MICHAEL MOORE'S *FAHRENHEIT 9/11* IS A WAKE UP CALL TO AMERICA. It is the winner of best picture at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival. I think it is good for all people—people of political preference and people of no political preference—to see this film. It will definitely make you wonder about things like how free we are and if our president really cares about us. I left the theatre with a renewed appreciation for the things I do have; like the freedom to go to college and not have to go to war; and a safe place to lay my head and grow up in. Sometimes it's easy to lose sight of what you do have because you focus on all the things you don't have. I also registered to vote shortly after I saw *Fahrenheit*. I realized that having an attitude of apathy won't get me anywhere.

*Fahrenheit 9/11* is a documentary about George W. Bush, from the time period of when he was "selected" president to now. You hardly see Michael Moore at all, but you hear him narrating and throwing out the occasional humorous comment or question. You see him riding around in an ice cream truck reading the Patriot Act to members of congress on a bull horn. It is an extremely interesting and fast paced documentary, better than some regular movies I've seen!

The opening shot flashes back to the 2000 election. We see the people of Florida cheering for Gore and then the recount of the votes. We learn about Bush's political ties and his failure as a businessman. We learn about Bush's love for vacation time and how he sat motionless in a classroom, reading *My Pet Goat* with school children when the first and second towers were hit on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The screen plunges into darkness as we hear the screams of people on September 11<sup>th</sup>. We hear a mom talk about how hard it is to be patriotic and have a son go to war. We hear the soldiers talk firsthand about their experiences. You get to see a lot more.

The biggest criticism I can find online from people who didn't like *Fahrenheit 9/11* is the claim that the facts are not accurate. Moore knew that people who didn't like the film would attempt to pick it apart, and for that reason; he hired a team of lawyers and editors to comb through the film to make sure everything was accurate. Moore's website ([www.michaelmoore.com](http://www.michaelmoore.com)) includes this information as well as some good resources for alternative media and information on voting and how to go about creating change.

*Fahrenheit* is amazing. It sent me through waves of emotion, sadness, anger, disgust, and a strong want to do something to change the way things are. Go see *Fahrenheit 9/11*—it might open up your eyes like it did mine. "It ignites a fire in people who had given up." - Michael Moore's response after seeing people come out of theatres in his home state of Michigan.

### Why Should I Call You Father?

Where were you when I was young?  
You don't love me,  
Why should I call you father when you are not  
around?  
You couldn't pick me up when I was down,  
How come huh?  
If you loved me, you would stay,  
No matter how far you are.  
It just takes one step that's all.  
Now I forever banish you from me,  
So you're not the father I thought you would be.  
Life goes on.  
Even if you're not around.  
Take a look to see if you can find me,  
Anywhere.  
Not there am I? Or it is you  
Who is not there.  
So, why should I call you father?