



REAL NEWS

SHAW COMMUNITY CENTER • May 2022



SOWING SEEDS FOR THE FUTURE: COMMUNITY GARDENS AS SITES OF EDUCATION & EMPOWERMENT

This summer, Shaw youth at our summer camp will be going Green! SCC Summer Camp 2022 meets 5 days a week, for six (6) weeks, from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. Camp will be held in-person, starting June 27 until August 5. SCC's Green Camp is designed to prevent summer learning loss and unfinished learning. The camp's extended daily schedule provides Shaw's children and youth with engaging ways to stay creative and involved. This gives all youth enough time for their activities, trips, and events. This summer, camp activities will include GARDENING, food security, food sovereignty and climate changes issues, career exploration, Capoeira, physical activities (basketball, swimming), and African drumming instruction. Thursdays are designated as field trip day. Older youth will participate in our Real News Media Intern program (see article) and Men Acquiring Life Skills (MALS) program. These programs allow older youth more time to focus on their own projects, on career exploration, college prep, college visits, swimming lessons, gardening, field trips and service projects,

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Check out our website:
www.shawcommunity.org

SCC's Mission : To expand the opportunities and enhance the lives of Shaw residents.

Sowing Seeds for the Future:

Community Garden Story Cont'd from page 1 -

Partnering with friends at Passion City Church, Shaw youth will use the Community Garden as a site of education and empowerment, exploring these themes:

1. Food security
2. Food sovereignty
3. Climate change and how it affects food security and food sovereignty

Food security is a situation that exists when all people at all times have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. **Food sovereignty** is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. For hungry and undernourished people, climate change is a threat multiplier. Since the early 1990s, the number of extreme weather-related disasters has doubled. This has reduced the yields of major crops and contributed to an increase in food prices and a decrease in income. These disasters have also disproportionately harmed low-income people and their access to food, which is why we have chosen to focus on the connection between climate change, food security and food sovereignty.



The characteristics of food sovereignty:

- Uses local cooperative science
- Builds knowledge and skills
- Leverages on traditional knowledge
- Works with nature
- Optimizes the contributions of ecosystems.
- Values food providers
- Localizes food systems.
- Puts control locally



SUMMER CAMP APPEAL - FUNDRAISING & FRIEND RAISING

We need your help. We need you! Who? You!

We need funding to:

- help defray the costs of camp for as many participants as possible. (This includes funds to defray registration costs, field trip costs, and specialized contractors (swim, Capoeira, art, music, African drumming));
- purchase gardening implements and tools such as hoses, trowels, shovels, kneelers, large catchment barrels, dehydrators, canning supplies, storage containers, seeds, seedlings and plants, soil, perlite, plant stakes
- purchase art and craft supplies
- purchase cameras, laptops, and software for our Real News Interns; and
- pay small stipends to our Real News Media interns and MALS team

We need community partners who can:

- help us with gardening
- chaperone on field trips; and
- serve as Career Day speakers, especially in environmental science.

To donate to SCC, go online to our website,

www.shawcommunity.org

Or send a check to:

**Shaw Community Center
1701 11th St. NW,
Washington, DC, 20001**

Please write "Camp 2022" in the memo line.

THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



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SCC Spotlight - Meet the Real News Media Interns

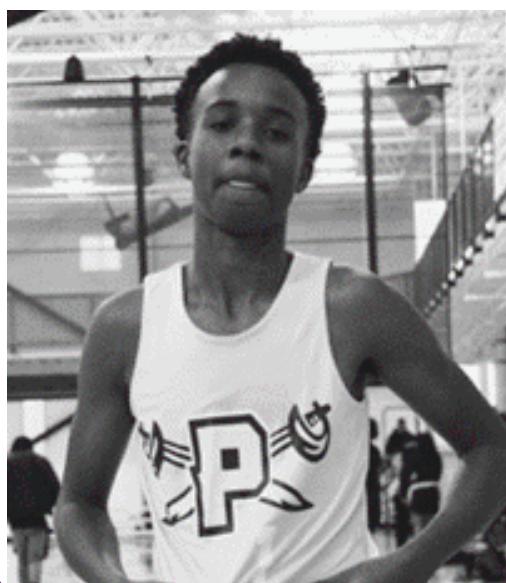
Meet four of our most engaged Real News Media Interns: Jovon Dancy, Frankie Alston, Saraii Prather, and Lyre Boone.

Staff member **Gabriel Parker** met them and four other participants throughout the year. They have captured all the images and videos of events at the Center (Art All Night, Harvest Fest, the Holiday event, spring break camp, and summer break camp), and have learned to edit to create polished media productions and to create posts for social media.

According to Mr. Gabriel, the idea behind the Real News Intern Program is to offer them project-based learning workshops, teaching skills around professional use of media equipment (DSLR cameras, camcorder, lighting, boom mics) and utilizing digital platforms (social media, internet).



Youth are honing their interviewing investigative journalism skills by reporting the "Real News" of situations and events going on in their own community such as the development of Benjamin Banneker High, Art All Night, and local business news. The goals are to empower youth to be more critical of their environment in order to better navigate society while learning practical skills involved in media production to further economic engagement in their future.



Jovon Dancy says he has acquired the skills to work a camera, interview people and be interviewed as well as edit the recording. He has interviewed a bookshop owner and his peers. He has learned to talk to strangers because if you can interview strangers, you can talk to anyone. Recently, he utilized those skills in his Banneker High School interview and has been accepted. He has gained an understanding of the difference between real news and fake news.

Jovon Dancy, age 13, attends Paul Public Charter School and will attend Banneker HS in the fall.

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Meet the Real News Media Interns !

(continued...)

Frankie Alston has become proficient in interview techniques as well as how to be interviewed and in working the cameras by making judgments about the angles from which to shoot as well as framing, and editing. She has been accepted to the Duke Ellington School of Arts.

Saraii Prather feels she has matured and takes things more seriously since joining. She has learned how to communicate with peers and how to tell real news from fake news. As the photographer of the group, she has enhanced her skills and can now edit photos on Photoshop.

Saraii says that during the process of distinguishing between real news and fake news, she researches various source materials, trying to find commonalties among the facts and then the differences to create a consistent set of facts (fact-checking). She records her research and thought processes in a journal.

Saraii says that she puts her new skills to use by teaching other people what she has learned. She hopes that she can leverage this skillset, knowledge, and connections in her career selection.



Frankie Alston, age 14, attends Cardozo Educational Campus and will attend Duke Ellington School of Arts in the fall.



Saraii Prather, age 13, attends DC Prep and will attend Girls Global in the fall.

Lyre Boone says she has greatly improved her articulation AND her attitude, learning more self-control. As she participates in the Real News program, she has learned how to communicate better and how to work with cameras. She has strengthened her bonds with coworkers and hopes these practical and life skills will help her choose a meaningful career in media production.



Lyre Boone, age 14, attends Brookland MS and will attend Coolidge HS in the fall.

SCC STAFF SPOTLIGHT

MELISSA LAWS, PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Melissa Laws serves as our Program Director since 2015 and came to SCC in 2011. She lives and works within Shaw and her dream is to own her own home. Her daughter, Selena, works as a Program Assistant for us and her son, D'Andre, the inventor of Dollar Burger delivery service, has attended our afterschool program and is part of the MALS team.

Melissa's story is one of personal triumph, marked by despair at the loss of her son, Malachi, in 2020. She brought her children to our afterschool program and worked as a parent volunteer. One evening after a parents' meeting, as she and Anne Troy, the former ED, were washing dishes, she remarked that she needed a chance, any chance to work and better herself. Rev. Troy hired her on a trial basis and the rest they say is history.

Melissa's connection to community members is as a counselor and advisor. Having survived houselessness, working at Walmart, she came to DC and used the system to empower herself. She learned the ropes, leveraged these empowerment programs, survived, and has become a sage and respected member of the community who is willing to share her experiences to help others do the same. She believes that this counselor/advisor role is her greatest contribution to our community - and her sacred duty.

She views the Center as THE anchor in the community for our BIPOC constituents. SCC is the linchpin of economic opportunities with many youth getting their first jobs with us through their Summer Youth Employment placements. SCC is also the place of first, second, and third chances for our youth and family members who face the humiliation of systemic racism on a daily basis.

One of our young artists was fortunate enough to receive a DC Arts Commission Fellowship but only with the combined efforts of Sara McDonough, Anne Troy, Gabriel Parker, and Melissa. It was Melissa who guided him through the myriad of paperwork needed, calling again and again for Clean Hand certificates, helping the artist set up a log in at the DC Vendor Portal and a bank account in which to deposit the funds. Hours of patient guidance with and for the young rap artist.

Melissa is hoping to own her own home one day in DC. As she says, "I am persistent and resilient." With SCC's help, we hope to help her achieve that goal within the next two years because just as she has helped so many in our community, she deserves that same care and attention from us.

News from the Board

Strategic Planning -- Reflecting on the Past to Shape the Future

The pandemic and the resulting closures presented challenges for nonprofit organizations on a scale that we couldn't have imagined two years ago. The Center's staff, under the leadership of ED Sudi West, met those challenges head on and continued to serve the Shaw community by making innovative changes to its programming platform. Now, as we can see the light at the end of the pandemic tunnel, we have an opportunity to use the lessons learned over the last two years and before to shape the direction that the Center will go in the future.

To this end, the Shaw Community Center board and staff have embarked on a strategic planning process that will take us on an exploration of our culture, values, and priorities, and culminate in a plan that will guide the Center's work for the next 3-5 years. The plan will have governance, administrative, fundraising, and programmatic components, all focused on fulfillment of the organization's mission.

We are looking forward not only to the end product and its implementation, but also to the planning process itself. It will be a time of reflection, reenergizing, and excitement as we envision what the future can bring for the Center and the youth that it serves.



Picture of YahSiah McAlpine
born 2/16/22

NEWS FROM MARQUETTA WASHINGTON

Marquette sends us this adorable pic of her new baby boy, YahSiah McAlpine.

YahSiah says:

Hi, my name is YahSiah McAlpine, I am now a 3-month-old baby boy. I was born on February 16, 2022, at 8:12am, weighing 8 lbs. 3oz. For my first two weeks of birth, I spent my time in the NICU where I had to undergo a lot of tests. I was attached to machines to help me breathe and feed because of complications at birth that caused me not to be able to breathe on my own.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

SCC staff is constantly trying to ensure that our program is the most effective and impactful it can be. To this end, the staff attends a variety of professional development opportunities.

Anne Troy and **Sara McDonough**, aka “the Development Team,” attended the **National Afterschool Association (NAA) Conference**, held March 20-24 at Caesar’s Palace, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Here are some of the data insights they gained:

- Data can, and should, be used for improvement.
- Use data to tell your story and to report and communicate success.
- Data needs to be constantly generated and collected.
- Data needs to be useful and work towards the continuous improvement of the youth programming.
- Kinds of data. There are different kinds of data for different purposes.
- What do people want to know?
- What data/metrics can tell our story?
- What we are learning-to-improve vs what we are reporting.
- How can we use both qualitative and quantitative data to communicate success when telling our stories?

In late April 2022, **Ms. Melissa Laws** and **Mr. Greg Windley** traveled to Palm Springs, California to attend the **BOOST Conference**. **BOOST** stands for **B**est of **O**ut-**O**f-School-**T**ime.

Melissa Laws enjoyed the in-person Boost Conference in sunny Palm Springs. She says, “Attending the Boost conference, I was able to rejuvenate, make connections, link to the latest tools and research, and gain inspiration that I can bring back to the SCC program. In the Teen Engagement and Empowerment workshop, we explored how to approach goal setting with teenagers by using 30 principles of communication to foster a solution-oriented mindset. This helps teenagers set and meet their goals; including identifying what is going to motivate a student, how to work together to identify obstacles, and then plot an effective roadmap to achieve their goals.

Greg Windley found many of the sessions insightful and had a great experience. Greg enjoyed sessions that demonstrated camp centered activities, designed to get the youth active and moving -- developing eye and hand coordination, while also fostering social learning opportunities, like building teamwork and social skills. He learned about NBA Math Hoops, a board game, that is played 2 on 2, to develop math skills. Youth use and practice math operations and skills, like adding, subtraction, multiplication, and division, to play the NBA basketball-themed game.

SCC Leads Systemic Change

Addressing the Black Wealth Gap



When it comes to building wealth, many Black Americans are facing an uphill battle. The median annual wage for Black workers is about 30% lower than that of white workers, according to a McKinsey & Company report. The report also found that 3.5 million of the country's Black households have a negative net worth due to debt.

Black households generally start with less family wealth. McKinsey estimated a \$330 billion disparity between Black and white families in the annual flow of new wealth, with 60% of that coming from inheritances. Because of that lack of generational wealth, Black families tend not to be exposed to investing.

The price of that gap can be huge. In 2064, the average white family likely will possess \$2,782,727 in wealth while the Black family wealth will be \$789,164. That's a 70% disparity. What are some steps Black Americans can do to address the racial wealth gap? How has SCC taken the lead in addressing this inequity?

Talk about it

Having financial conversations can lead to better decision-making and can help you avoid making mistakes. Talk to people whom you trust. Ask many questions. Attend SCC's Financial Literacy workshops.

Start saving

The most important thing to do is to start saving, even if it is just a small amount every month. Almost three-quarters, or 73%, of Black adults do not have enough emergency savings to cover three months of expenses. Once you build up that emergency fund, you can put money into assets that could give you a higher return, like the stock market.

ForUsAll 401(k)

This year, for the very first time, SCC set up a 401(k)retirement plan for our staff. Every staff member has taken advantage of this opportunity with the auto-enrollment feature, a minimum 4% auto-deduction and a 4% employer match. SCC selected ForUsAll because it has a separate crypto-currency portal. Crypto IS risky, however, the rate of return is so much higher that our staff can do some catching up - especially those within 5 years of retirement. For crypto, ForUsAll has instituted a 5% of account balance as a guardrail against the risks. SCC also distributed our every first profit sharing to eligible employees.

cont'd - Addressing the Black Wealth Gap

Buy a home

As you accumulate more savings and start to think about how you can invest, consider buying a house. It's not only a place to live, it's also an investment.

Start a business

Wealth can also be generated through business ownership. Ask us about SCC's Cultural Asset Incubator; a program to enhance entrepreneurial opportunities.

Think about future generations

You may have to sacrifice something you need or want so that the person behind you can jump over you. That may mean not spending as much on an annual basis so you can put money away to pass down to your children or starting a college savings plan. It can also mean buying life insurance so that your heirs can inherit something.

In the end, building wealth is about being patient. Don't think that your wealth is going to change overnight because of some get rich quick scheme. Wealth building doesn't happen overnight.



SEE OUR NEW WEBSITE AT WWW.SHAWCOMMUNITY.ORG

Our donation platform now includes stock transactions and cryptocurrency.

Thanks, Flipcause, for helping us set this up and for your patience.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

To date, for Fiscal Year 2022, we are so blessed to have received funding from:

- Rock Spring UCC for new computers
- Westmoreland UCC for new computers
- Passion City Church for general operating support
- Potomac Association for general operating support
- DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities for general operating support and Facilities and Buildings Relief
- John Edward Fowler Memorial Foundation for general operating support
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency for building security and surveillance
- 21 Century Community Learning Center and Learn 24 Out-of-School Time continuation grants for afterschool and camp programming
- Learn 24 Out-of-School-Time Strategic Planning and Capacity Building grant
- DC Events for our annual Art All Night - Lee on the 11th Celebration

Executive Director's Corner

Replicating Banneker's Clockwork in Shaw

by Sudi West, Executive Director

Benjamin Banneker was a self-taught engineer, surveyor, astronomer, and author. Born near Baltimore, Maryland in 1731, he was the child of an African father, who had worked to purchase his own freedom from slavery. Fascinated by a pocket-watch shown to him by a traveling salesman, young Banneker designed and built a clock out of wood – specifically, he reverse-engineered a working model by taking apart the original and improvising an alternative mechanism and materials. Having attained a formal education to only the eighth-grade level, the precocious Benjamin Banneker went on to become an expert astronomer, publishing an Almanac of readings to predict weather affecting farmers.

He was the first Black American to earn a Presidential Appointment and used his savant-level engineering talent and photographic recall to reproduce plans for the construction of Washington DC's Capitol Building and Monuments – entirely from memory. Banneker's accomplishments served as powerful examples to dispel the idea that Black people possess inferior intelligence; a non-scientific idea that unfortunately persists nearly 300 years later.

Today, a math and sciences magnet school bearing Banneker's name shares the block with Shaw Community Center. Serving public education of DC residents, the school has earned a reputation for fostering 'Black Excellence,' and a pathway to higher education. Indeed, several middle school students like Frankie Alston, Sydney Lewis and Yisrael Kittrell successfully lobbied the DC Council for concessions in the placement, design, and features of the centrally-placed modern campus development. Now their peers like Jovon Dancey, Nathaniel McKinney and others benefit from their peers' precocious civic efforts and have completed the rigorous screening interviews required to be admitted to Banneker for high school. A generation earlier, several of my peers tested into the school during their eighth-grade year; they went on to study at the nation's top universities, and now have become eminently successful, doctors, lawyers, engineers, authors, and parents. I relate their example to the youth at the Shaw Community Center, hoping they will continue to be inspired to reverse engineer and duplicate Banneker's success, and the success of the scholars that preceded them at the eponymously- named school in Shaw.



Kidest Gebre accepts a Shaw Community Scholarship award from **Director Sudi West** at the Banneker Academic High School senior day. Kidest plans to pursue a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Environmental Sciences and Geography at the University of Richmond.