



The Newsletter of SELF ENHANCEMENT, INC.

YOUTH POTENTIAL REALIZED

SPRING/SUMMER 2008



More SEI Class of 2008 students: Emmanuel Ford (above) reads his poetry at the Senior Banquet. (See page 3 for sample). Chelsea Deloney (below) is 2008 Jefferson High School Rose Princess



SELF ENHANCEMENT, INC.

PHONE (503) 249-1721

FAX (503) 249-1955

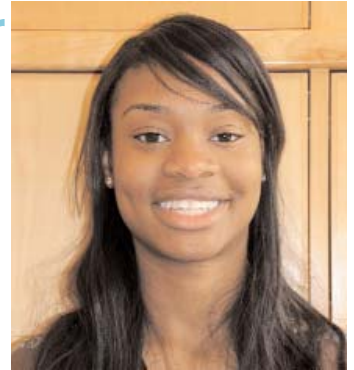
www.selfenhancement.org

SEI High School Students Soar

This year, 100% of Self Enhancement's high school seniors are graduating. Leading their class, four SEI students are valedictorians of their 2008 high school classes, members of the National Honors Society, and all around impressive young people.

Danielle Tucker and **Taylor Allen** are the valedictorians for Grant High School. They have inspired each other as best friends since they were four years old. Both young ladies are members of Grant's highly competitive **Constitution Team**, which placed **third in the nation**, and both have been accepted and earned scholarships to attend historic **Spelman College** in Atlanta. Danielle has been in SEI since third grade, when she found her home in the Collins Multi-cultural Library, reading and playing Scrabble with Genia Adair. Her leadership includes serving as Treasurer and Vice President of her high school class and being a Peer Mediator. Taylor has grown up in SEI, entering in second grade. She is representing Grant as Rose Princess, served as President of her Junior and Senior classes, won the Senior Leadership Award at Grant, and plans to become a constitutional lawyer.

Grace Muange and **Nyasha Sims** are Jefferson High School's valedictorians. Grace is in the SEI Pamplin Leaders Program and **winner of the prestigious Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholarship** which covers full tuition for both a bachelor's and a masters degree program. She is also involved in SEI's partner program 'Minds Matter', has been Vice President of her class for two years, and is an active community volunteer with the Red Cross, Planned Parenthood, the African American Health Coalition, and the Boys Academy at Jefferson. Nyasha has been in Self Enhancement's core program since 8th grade. Nyasha is also in Pamplin, and is active as a peer mediator, tutor, and assistant with disabled students at Jefferson. She won a **full scholarship** to Seattle Pacific College and plans to own her own business. *For details on these and other outstanding Self Enhancement high school students, go to: www.selfenhancement.org/whoweare/success.*





President's Message

The situation for youth in this nation is cause for grave concern. In many of our great cities, less than half of the students are graduating from high school. In Detroit the graduation rate is only 29%; in Indianapolis it is 30%; In Cleveland it is 34%. Even Portland Public Schools' graduation rate is only 54%.

Those students who don't graduate from high school are young people with little hope for the future and little to offer their communities. In contrast, here at Self Enhancement we are about to see 100% of our high school seniors graduate, most of them with plans and scholarships for college, many of them who are already leaders in their school and the community, and we expect all of them to be positive, contributing citizens. All of this, when 90% of them started off with significant barriers to success. The work that we are doing at Self Enhancement is urgently needed in Portland and across the country. We are called upon to expand this work as quickly as possible to reach as many youth as possible. With your support, we can lead a movement to help all youth realize their potential.

The Extended SEI Family

Nike continues to be integrally involved in SEI. In April, Nike put on a dazzling International Hoops Competition, featuring members of the Trail Blazers and SEI students and alumni. All semester, SEI high schoolers were engaged in the process of shoe design with Nike experts. And on May 13, Nike sponsored the Youth and Their Truth Corporate Luncheon, where a panel of nine SEI students shared their struggles and successes shaped by the SEI experience, inspiring over 60 local business leaders.



Point B Solutions Group is playing a critical role in executing SEI's business plan for expansion and replication, helping to refine the process of implementation and conducting project management workshops for key leaders. For more, go to www.selfenhancement.org/supportSEI/corporatepartners

Self Enhancement's Alumni

Association held its first gathering in January, with a reception, a lively multi-media production 'Black Love' led by SEI alumna and staff Terese and Shara Brazzle, plus an after hours party. If you are a former SEI student or staff member, don't miss the next event! Please contact Robin Beavers at 503-249-1721, ext. 225.

The Collins Foundation

continued its steadfast support of Self Enhancement's library and literacy programs, announcing a three year grant of \$180,000 in April. In a December ceremony, Maribeth Collins handed a new library plaque to Kronda and Tracy Adair, re-naming the library in honor of their mother, Self Enhancement's late beloved librarian, Eugenia Adair.

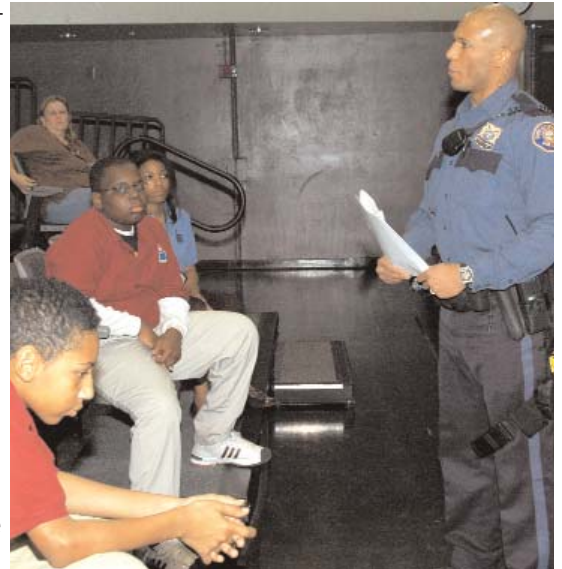


SEI's 2008 Carolyn Lewis Historically Black College Tour involved 23 high school juniors visiting 10 colleges (Fisk, Spelman/Morehouse, Clark, and others) in four southern states, plus the Martin Luther King Historical Site in Atlanta.

Choosing a positive path

Although many come to shine academically, in the arts, and as community leaders, 90% of SEI students begin the program with significant barriers to success. These barriers include being born addicted to crack or otherwise dealing with family substance abuse; being in foster care, and/or having parents incarcerated, deceased or absent from their lives for other reasons; experiencing or witnessing violence, abuse and/or neglect; being homeless or living in other impoverished and chaotic situations. Yet SEI students rates for criminality, substance abuse, and teen parenting are only a fraction of the general rates for African American youth in Multnomah County. Why the difference? Besides being presented with positive options for their present and future, SEI students have guidance to help them deal with the challenging environments they come from and the resulting anger and grief. This guidance includes the unofficial 7th SEI Standard 'In SEI, we keep it real.' SEI students have many opportunities to listen and engage in frank talk about their life situations. Portland police officers, former gang members, doctors and recovering substance abusers talk with students about hard truths of life and

death with gangs and drugs. Strong relationships and regular discussions help students bring up tough situations and feelings where they could get hurt or hurt others but instead come to positive



resolutions. And SEI staff respond quickly and fully when a crisis (such as a sudden death in the family or being kicked out of their house) occurs and a student needs support, helping that young person recover and stay on track.



SEI Student Art

SEI Academy students interviewed people in the community and took expressive photo portraits for a public art project called **Hello Neighbor**. Longtime SEI partners Julie Keefe and Caldera coordinated the project. Look for posters throughout North Portland, and go to www.helloneighborproject.org for more! Paintings by SEI elementary and middle school students were featured at the **Alberta Street Art Hop** on May 17. The SEI **drumline** was in the Art Hop parade - and dazzled an even bigger crowd at the Starlight Rose Festival Parade.



Excerpt from Emmanuel Ford's Rap

Performed at Youth and Their Truth

My family was poor-no shampoo for my living conditions
 No big house, no pool to dip in
 No going out in nice groups to whip in
 nor stepping out in nice shoes to slip in.
 No vacation boat cruise to the Caribbean.
 Just paper bags that dudes were bringing liquor in,
 asking for a shot,"let the little dude get a sip"
 Rolling big blunts my uncle's lighting spliffs again
 in front of me and I ain't even hit the age of ten.
 Man, I barely had food in the kitchen.
 When eating cereal don't bother -
 had to eat my Frosted Flakes just with cold water....
 See growing up in the slums was nothing real nice
 but I'm realer than real, spitting that real life.
 I sit and reminisce through a flow
 So I just told you bout the life that I used to know.

Emmanuel Ford was named Mr. SEI in 2007 and 2008, graduated from Grant High School June 3, and will attend Morehouse College on scholarship. For full text, go to www.selfenhancement.org/successstories

2007 Annual Report Corrections

The following donors were accidentally omitted from the annual report:
 Fred and Lori Charley
 Alan and Ami Fleenor
 Chris Folkestad
 Linda Harris (SEI staff)
 Noho and Michelle Marchesi, in honor of Carolyn S. Lewis

J. Michael Schultz was incorrectly listed as 'James M. Schultz'.

Ms. and Mr. SEI 2007

SEI Employees of the Year
Patrice Wilson and Darryl King

**Upcoming Events****Cirque du Cycling June 14**

A Mississippi Street celebration of bicycles with free family biking, a bike parade, criterion races, live music, and more. Proceeds will benefit SEI. For more information, go to www.cyclingcircus.com or contact Claire Baker at claireb@selfenhancement.org or 503-249-1721, ext. 244.

SEI Academy 8th Grade Graduation

June 13, 6:00 at the Center for Self Enhancement. For more information contact Linda Harris at 503-249-1721, ext. 327 or lindah@selfenhancement.org

2007 Art + Soul gala dinner and auction September 20

For more information contact Sharon Brabenac at 503 249-1721, ext. 264 or sharonb@selfenhancement.org

2007 Here + Now cocktail party

October 18. See www.selfenhancement.org for more details on participating restaurants, sponsors, and how to get your tickets. For more information contact Sharon Brabenac at 503-249-1721, ext. 264 or sharonb@selfenhancement.org

Announcements**Mobile Medical Clinic**

The Multnomah County Mobile Medical Clinic will return to SEI Community Services (4341 Vancouver Ave.) to provide free health services for families without health insurance. For more information, call 503-285-0493.

To schedule a tour of SEI, please contact Sharon Brabenac at 503-249-1721, ext. 264 or sharonb@selfenhancement.org



SELF ENHANCEMENT, INC.

3920 North Kerby Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97227-1255

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