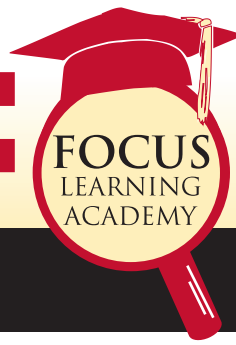


THE FOCUS



Newsletter...

Fall 2011

Focus Think Tank: Back to School, Back to PEACE



Focus Southwest students at the Back to School, Back to Peace Think Tank on September 15.

Focus Learning Academy, along with York Masons at The Kings Arts Complex and Ezekial Lodge # 4, hosted a "Back to School, Back to Peace" Think Tank on September 15. This event was an opportunity for Columbus youth and the community to come together to discuss stopping teen violence.

Focus students, staff and community members were able to showcase their gifts and talents that they use as coping mechanisms in times of need. This Think Tank allowed attendees to share what their PEACE is through performances such as singing, poetry reading, acting and even a fashion show.

alternative and positive methods to students to handle situations involving violence. During this event, students were exposed to different constructive activities available to them in the Columbus area.

In light of the recent shootings involving Columbus Youth and the police, a priority of this Think Tank was to teach

Focus Learning Academy had the pleasure of having guest speakers from the city of Columbus Mayor's office, the Masons, the King Arts Complex, the Huckleberry House, the Columbus Police, the Ohio State Youth Violence Prevention Council and Columbus Parks and Recreation.

Everyone involved really benefited from the great information, breakout sessions and performances.

Focus Partners with CeaseFire for Viewing of *The Interrupters*

On November 9, Focus Learning Academy joined CeaseFire, The Ohio State University and Columbus Public Schools, for a viewing of the new CeaseFire movie and panel discussion at The Wexner Center for the Arts.

CeaseFire is a national partnership to reduce shootings using a public health approach has been scientifically proven to reduce shootings and killings.

The new movie titled *The Interrupters*, follows three courageous "violence interrupters" working for the innovative organization CeaseFire, as they patrol the city's meanest streets to defuse scenarios of heart-stopping volatility.

Thirty students and staff from all three Focus schools participated in small group discussions, met actors

from the movie and came up with ways to implement what they learned in their everyday lives.



Focus students and staff at Focus East before leaving to the viewing of "The Interrupters" at The Wexner Center for the Arts.

Focus Learning Academy East

Central State University Campus Tour

On October 13, eight students accompanied by Mrs. Neal, Mr. Watson and the good folks at the Huckleberry House went to Central State University for a campus tour. The students enjoyed themselves as they learned about CSU and experienced the atmosphere of homecoming. The students toured the campus and ate lunch with college students in the student union.

Spooky Tales Halloween Reading and Art Showcase

On October 31, the Literacy, Art and Spanish departments at Focus East teamed up to do a *Spooky Tales Halloween Reading and Art Showcase*. It took place in the Multipurpose room that was transformed into a "Haunted Gallery." Students learned about Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), heard scary stories read by staff and viewed artwork done by Art and Spanish students. There was a costume contest for students and snacks were available as a fundraiser for the Literacy Magazine.

Welcome Daniel Cook!

Welcome to Mr. Daniel Cook, the new BSW social work intern from OSU. He will be at Focus East and is ready and willing to help students with concerns at school or home.

Focus Learning Academy Southwest

Breakfast Sandwich Day

Staff members of Focus Southwest held a special breakfast event at the end of September to let students know what a great start they've had to the school year. The staff made and served a variety of breakfast sandwiches to each and every student in attendance. The options were plentiful with bacon, ham, sausage, bagels and english muffins. It was a great opportunity for staff and students to connect, and a very nice way for the staff to thank all of their wonderful students for making the beginning of the year so smooth and productive!

Mission Metamorphosis

Sixteen students have completed the prerequisites for membership into Mission Metamorphosis, a program designed to help young ladies earn their high school diplomas and to teach them the skills needed to become responsible and competent adults through the support of the community and professional individuals. Focus students Ramiya Catten, Charmayne Forrest, Unique Martin and Leslie Newsome won tickets to the Royal Comedy Tour featuring Sommore at the Palace Theatre on Oct. 15, by earning at least one core credit, maintaining an 80% attendance rate and receiving no behavior referrals. The tickets were a donation from Raeanne Ellis from Radio One. Latisha Sanders and Melanie Chambers, also met these requirements but were unable to attend the comedy tour due to prior commitments, they were awarded other gifts instead.

Southwest CBI Class Toured Everest Institute

Members of the CBI class at Focus Southwest toured Everest Institute on November 9. Melanie Chambers, Taylor Collins, Jennifer Day, Blake Freize, Isawan Foster and Allison Moffo participated in hands-on training in Pharmacy Tech, Medical Assisting, Dental Assisting and Medical Billing classes offered by Everest. The students were intrigued by each of these courses and asked intelligent questions! Transportation and Lunch was provided by the staff at Everest Institute with assistance from Taylor Leonard, the HS Representative from Everest.

Focus North High School

2011-2012 Focus Lady Cheer Team

The following ladies have made the 2011-2012 Focus North High School Lady Cheer Team: April Perry, Shayla Stewart, TreVaun Broadus, Sarafinah Wharton, Farnaz Yeganeh, Kiara Bass-Smith, Paris Tucker, Alana Lyons, Janeika Smith, Deja Hendricks, Jazzmyne Ward and Marquilla Jones (Captain). They have already kicked off the season working hard practicing after school two days a week preparing for the season. They have also been dedicated students by having good standing in attendance, behavior and academics. Their first fundraiser will be selling crush pop cans for a dollar - "Buy a Crush for your Crush" - the cheerleaders will be delivering these pop cans to students in class from their secret crush.



Focus East Director Rashaun Holliman and student Mykayla Terry, in their Halloween Costumes at the showcase.

and events from the Focus schools.

Focus North High School Spirit Week

The week of November 7 was Spirit Week at Focus North High School. Each day was a different theme that students and staff either dressed up for or participated in. Monday was *Relax Pajama Day*, Tuesday was *Rip the Runway (Focus Next Top Model)*, Wednesday was *Smack Day*, Thursday was *Celebrity Day* and Friday was the Homecoming Dance. Friday also included a tribute to staff member Mr. Johnson for Veteran's Day as well as two speakers, including Miss Black Ohio. The 2011 Homecoming Dance was held at Focus North High School in the evening. The ladies wore elegant dresses and the guys wore their three piece suits! The students were not only stunning in their appearance, but also in their behavior.

Congratulations to the 2011 Homecoming King Wayne Pruitt, Homecoming Queen Marquilla Jones and Homecoming Princess Taylor Shockey!



Focus North High School students, staff and guests (Miss Black Ohio in middle picture) from the 2011 Focus North High School Spirit Week and Homecoming Dance.

Focus Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program

CTE Department Hosts Life After Focus: College Knowledge for Students and Parents

Life After Focus: College Knowledge for Students and Parents will take place at Lincoln College of Technology on Thursday, November 17, from 4 to 7 p.m. Lincoln College of Technology is on the bus line and has a stop right outside the college.

There will be four, 25 minute workshops on Job Readiness, Choosing the Right College, Money Matters: How to Finance a College Education and The College Experience. Each session will be offered at two different times between 4:30 and 6 p.m. and will be presented by staff from both Focus and Lincoln. Dinner will be served from 6:30 – 7 p.m. There is no fee to participate in this event; however, all students must RSVP to their school Dean or CTE Instructor. Participation from students from each school, as well as their parents/guardians, would be ideal.

The target group for this event is sophomores and juniors and their parents/guardians, however, freshmen and seniors are welcome too. The purpose is 3-fold: to equip students with "college knowledge" before they become seniors, to encourage parents to consider enrolling in college with their child/children so they can support each other while getting post-secondary training and for parents to garner a better understanding of the college application and admission process so that they are aware of what their students are experiencing and can be able to better assist them. This event is an informational session for students who are interested in learning how to become better prepared for two and four year colleges.

CTE Gives Back

The CTE Students are sponsoring the 4th Annual CTE Gives Back service learning project. CTE students at each school are donating and collecting items from other students and staff to fill four gift baskets that will be given away in a free raffle. The baskets will be presented to a female student, a male student, a student-parent and a staff member. The purpose of this service learning project is to teach students about the power of giving without expecting anything in return.

The CTE students would like for all staff members and students to contribute at least one item from the list which is posted around each of the school buildings. If anyone would like a paper copy of the list, please see your CTE instructor or contact Dr. Wolfe. Items will be collected through November 10. Gift baskets will be awarded during the week of November 14.

Teacher Spotlight

Melissa M. Turner, Focus East

What is your position/title?
Office Manager

How long have you been with FLA?

About three months. I'm still a newbie!

What is your favorite thing about FLA?

The people are my absolute favs! Both the student body as well as the staff are fantastic. We're all like one big family.

What do you want students to accomplish while they attend FLA?

I would like to see every student take something valuable away from their learning experience here at Focus. So, while they are earning their diplomas, I hope they are also learning something about themselves that will enhance their future. I'm sure they will all go on and accomplish great things!

What advice or insight do you want to pass on to students?

If you believe, you can achieve!

Favorites:

Color: Pink

Food: That's a toss up between steak and shrimp!

Sport: College Football

Hobby/Interest: My interests include anything I can do with my family.

Season: Spring

Music: I enjoy all kinds of music.

Vacation Destination: Take me to Italy!

School Subject: I loved Language Arts when I was in high school. My favorite subject now would have to be Business.

Memory of your childhood: Spending Christmas break and summer vacations in Georgia. That was something I looked forward to every year.



Student Spotlight

Anthony Pridmore, Focus East

I chose to attend FLA because...
it was closest to home.

My favorite thing about FLA is...
everyone is nice, staff and students.

The teachers at FLA are...
very nice.

I want to be...
the best I can be.

I am thankful for...
having what I have and for where I'm at in life today.

Life after Focus...
not sure yet.



Focus Southwest Jingle Ballers

On December 3, staff members from Focus Learning Academy Southwest will participate in the 25th annual Jingle Bell 5K Run/Walk in downtown Columbus.

Their team, named the "Jingle Ballers," consists of 20 people including staff members, friends and family.

The Jingle Ballers set a goal to raise \$500 for the race and have raised \$452.50 so far through registration fees and donations! All the proceeds from the Jingle Bell 5k benefit the Central Ohio Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation.

Thus far, the team consists of six staff members- Ms. Mutz, Ms. Jones, Mr. Hill, Mrs. Straight, Mr. Murph and Dr. Nelson Slagle, who this year will be jingling from her jammies!

Focus Southwest will also have a holiday bake sale before the race to raise more money for the foundation. Anyone who is interested is welcome to join their team and join in on the holiday fun.

Please contact Ms. Jones at Focus Learning Academy Southwest if you are interested!

Important Dates

Nov. 23 - 25	No School - Thanksgiving
Nov. 24	Staff In-service
Dec. 22	Staff In-service
Dec. 23	No School - Christmas Break
Dec. 26-30	No School - Christmas Break
Jan. 3	School Resumes
Jan. 13	End of Second Nine Weeks
Jan. 16	OTELA begins
Jan. 16	No School - Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 20	Grade Cards Mailed
Jan. 27	Winter Graduation

