







Cultivating generations of strong, creative, and empowered young women

Dear Rachel,	In This Issue:
I'm back!	A Wish List
Yes, I'm back from my leave of absence. I gave birth to a beautiful baby boy named Maceo on April 12, 2009, and was able to spend three months bonding with him. Though I'll miss being able to spend so much time with both of my children, it's still great to be back with my "girls" here at Oasis.	Spotlight on the Leadership Institute Program
	A Profile of Oasis Youth Staff Jah'Torri Bettis
I'd also like to take this opportunity to give a huge "thank you" to Jessica, who served as Interim Executive Director in my absence, for doing such a fantastic job. Being an Executive Director of a successful nonprofit organization can be hectic, even overwhelming at times, but Jessica fulfilled the role beautifully. And now that I'm back, she'll be taking a new role as the Director of Programs & Services with more responsibility over our monthly newsletter, among other things. I'm sure she'll do a great job with that, as well!	Come to Our Final Summer Event on August 13!
	Join Us for SWANK
You may have also noticed a slightly different look to the newsletter - that's because we've got a new logo, and so we've tweaked the newsletter's design to better coordinate with it. Wonderfully designed by Gg.galang DESIGN, the new logo features bold colors, with our tagline front and center: "Cultivating generations of strong, creative, and empowered young women."	Our Back to School Party
And that is our goal with everything we do here at Oasis: we aim to help girls realize their potential, live healthy lives, and make a positive impact in their communities. I see our programs' powerful effect on our lives of our "girls," and it makes me proud and grateful to be part of such an incredible organization.	A Wish List!
And as always, thanks for reading!	We've got a great new home, and we'd welcome a hand in furnishing it.
	We've already received a George Foreman grill from a generous donor -- it's great for making healthy snacks!
Rachel P. Paras, Executive Director Oasis For Girls rparas@sfoasis.org	Can you help with additional donations? We've established an online wish list at Target to make it easy.
	It's Easy to Donate Right Now!
	Want to help support the advancement and capacity of the girls and young women of our community?
	Just click the "Donate Now" button, below, and you'll join the ranks of supporters helping us to help shape our collective future!
	 CLICK & PLEDGE
	Quick Links
	Oasis For Girls website
	Here's our new address: Oasis For Girls 245-11th Street, 3rd floor San Francisco, CA 94103 Phone: 415-701-7991 Fax: 415-701-0131 sfoasis.org
	Join Our Mailing List!

Creating Leaders for the Next Generation: Spotlight on Oasis For Girls' Leadership Institute Program

Since its start in 2007, Oasis For Girls' Young Women's Leadership Institute has used hands-on activities to cultivate the leadership skills of girls and young women interested in maximizing their ability to effect social and political change.

In each eight-week session, 10-15 participants ages 14-20 examine a single theme, chosen for its relevance to their lives. Through research, discussion, workshops, and creative learning, this year's cohort is exploring the theme of love; in particular, they are examining media exploitation and its effects on relationships.

A highlight of each summer's Institute is the retreat, which this summer was held at Ben Lomond Quaker Center, just outside of Santa Cruz. There, nestled among the redwoods, the girls discussed issues of oppression, activism, self-awareness, and social change. Just as importantly, the retreat "gave the girls both the time and opportunity to get to know each other and strengthen their connections," says Program Coordinator Jocyl Sacramento.

In addition to forming bonds and developing leadership skills, this summer's Institute girls have advanced their creative and technical skills, as well, making a video as part of their action project. In the process, they're learning how to create a storyboard, conduct interviews, operate a video camera, and edit film.

And they've gotten a little history lesson on feminism, too, "which the girls are really into," says Sacramento. "They're able to make the connection between the women before them, who struggled to have all these benefits, and how that's enabled them to live their lives today. It's cool to support them in making that realization."

And what does Sacramento get out of her role as Program Coordinator? "The girls give me hope that the Leadership Institute will be a catalyst for them to become agents of change in their communities," she explains. "They realize that things aren't always just or fair, but that they have the power to do something about it."

With the third annual Leadership summer now drawing to a close, Sacramento's aspirations are far from satisfied. "I'd like to have a year-long program instead of just eight weeks," she says, and she'd like the program to teach peer education. She also hopes to see the program deepen its work with other community groups; "I'd like to collaborate more with community partners to bring additional resources to the program," she explains.

But most of all, Sacramento is thrilled to be part of a program that enables girls to become leaders in their communities. Helping girls and young women to discover their capacity to examine the world and their opportunities in it, Sacramento concludes, has "affirmed for me that I love what I do here."



A Profile of Oasis Youth Staff Jah'Torri Bettis

It was a twist of fate that brought Jah'Torri Bettis to Oasis For Girls.

In eighth grade, a friend of Jah'Torri's planned to participate in an Oasis program, but when her plans shifted at the last minute, she asked if Jah'Torri wanted to take her place. After undergoing an interview, Jah'Torri was accepted into the first Leadership Institute program in the summer of 2007.

Since then, Jah'Torri has participated in several other Oasis programs, including RISE and Arts Apprenticeship. She was also a member of the youth team that conducted Part 1 of Oasis's Measure Up evaluation initiative. Being involved in Measure Up was "pretty cool, and definitely challenging - but good challenging," says Bettis. "We got to learn patience and how to evaluate programs and data."

Deepening her commitment, in 2008 Jah'Torri was hired as an Oasis Youth Staff to provide crucial youth leadership. In this role, Jah'Torri co-facilitates Girl 2 Girl, Oasis's arts-based life skills program for middle school girls. In addition, working with an adult ally, she plans Membership activities for Oasis alumni. Finally, she provides crucial youth voice in organizational decision making, represents Oasis at community events, and performs various office administrative tasks.

But Jah'Torri doesn't spend *all* of her after-school time at Oasis - she's also a member of United Playaz, a violence prevention and youth leadership program that works with San Francisco youth, at schools and community centers, through street outreach, and at San Francisco Juvenile Justice Center. If that weren't enough, Jah'Torri also spends time at Excelsior Teen Center, part of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center.

And all of Jah'Torri's hard work has paid off: on July 18th, 2009, she was awarded one of just twelve 2009 Youth Warrior awards from the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth Empowerment Fund Advisory Board, recognizing her for her commitment to bettering both herself and her community.

Bettis attributes her time at Oasis for transforming her and the way she sees the world. Interacting with girls from various cultures "gives me that push to explore different communities, like Black, White, Asian, whatever," she asserts. "If I grew up without the knowledge I know now, I'd be a totally different person." And what would she tell other girls who are thinking about applying for an Oasis program? "You won't regret doing it," she states. "The program will definitely help you out in the long run."

As to her future, Bettis plans on going to college - she's considering San Jose State or Spelman College - majoring in Women's Studies or Psychology.

Whatever her choice, it's clear that this dynamo is on the road to making a lasting an impact on her community.




Come to Our Final Summer Event on August 13!

Oasis For Girls proudly presents our final summer event, "The Summer of Sisterly Love," a celebration of the Leadership Institute, RISE, and Arts Apprenticeship programs.

Offering multi-media and spoken word productions, the event will be held Thursday, August 13, 2009, at 6:00 PM at Brava Theater Center, 2789 24th Street @ York.

The event is free, but donations are happily accepted. A reception will follow with free food. Come and celebrate sisterly love with the girls of Oasis!





proudly present
**the SUMMER OF
SISTERLY LOVE**
a celebration of the
OASIS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE/ RISE / ARTS APPRENTICESHIP
programs through multi media and spoken word


Thursday August 13, 2009 6pm
FREE (donations accepted)
at Brava Theater Center
2789 24th Street @ York

24th St. Bart • Muni Lines 9, 14, 49, 27,33,48
Reception to Follow • Food Provided

Special thanks to our Funders:
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*Oasis is a project of The Tides Center

Upcoming Events

Join us for...



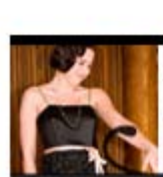



Swank's Sixth Annual Holiday Party will benefit Oasis For Girls!

Join us on December 4, 2009, from 7-11 PM, at the Payne Mansion, 1409 Sutter Street in San Francisco.

From the Payne Mansion's ritzy interior to the bubbly VIP reception and the live jazz, this party will be the cat's meow!

Pow.wow Network and Oasis For Girls share the mission to build community around and support, and foster women (and girls) in business. Last year, the SWANK event raised over \$5,000 for Oasis and our Future Fund Scholarships.

We hope you'll join us this year, building on this momentum while enjoying a fabulous evening of tickets at \$40 each grant you entrée to the main event, which begins at 8 PM.

To reserve your ticket now, go to <http://www.swankbypowwow.org/>.

Upcoming Events

Oasis Alumni:

You're invited to come to our...

Back to School Party
Friday, August 21st, 2009
5pm-7pm

Win prizes playing wii games, card games, mafia, board games, icebreakers, and more! We will also have pizza and ice cream!

Please e-mail Jah'Torri at jbettis@sfoasis.org or call (415) 701-7991 to **RSVP by August 19th**.

