



Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church

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Pleasant News

Commissioned by the Lord



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How did you become a believer in Jesus Christ? When you look back, do certain people come to mind -- people who had a part in sharing the Good News with you? God could have accomplished His work without any help, but He chose to reach the unsaved through believers.

In **Matthew 28:19-20**, Jesus charged His disciples to "go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you . . ." Though addressed to the Lord's closest followers, the "Great Commission" clearly applies to the entire body of Christ.

First of all, the

instruction is for the individual believer. God wants each of us to testify by conversation and conduct to the life-changing experience of knowing Christ. We are to extend His unconditional love to the lost, the needy, and the hurting in our midst.

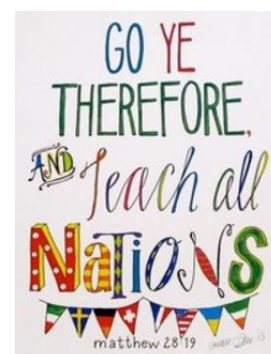
Secondly, the Great Commission has a corporate application: making disciples and training them in God's ways is meant to be the mission of every church. When we gather for worship and instruction, God pours His love into us so that it can naturally overflow into the lives of other people.

Too many Christians are content to settle for a minimal belief in Jesus -- they have trusted Him for salvation from

their sins and know they are going to heaven. Many times, they go no further. As a result, these believers miss out on the amazing joy of being a disciple of Christ.

When a church body takes the Great Commission seriously, God opens amazing doors of opportunity. As we follow His lead rather than our own preferences, we will witness the incredible results of faith in action.

Grace and Peace



Focus on Mt. Pleasant's Pastoral Staff

By Laura Blenman



Minister Blane Smith grew up in Chester, PA and graduated from Chester High School. His 'praying mother' raised her children by herself in the Baptist church and filled them with 'the Word of God.' Not long

ago, Blane found out that, when he was a child, his blind grandfather had a vision and told Blane's mother that her son would one day be a preacher. Sometimes his mother hinted at this revelation, but she never told him about his grandfather's vision for him.

Minister Smith was previously an Associate Minister under the Rev. Victor Fletcher, and it was during this time that he reconnected with his friend from high school, Gina Harris, a Mt. Pleasant member. One of the first things that she asked him, not knowing that he was a Christian, was if he was saved. On September 29th, Blane & Gina Smith will celebrate their 5th wedding anniversary.

Minister Blane has seen hard times but God has always provided. One day, he met a woman named Veronica who invited him to Bible Study and, because she had this unnatural glow on her face, he accepted her invitation. She prayed over him and put anointing oil on him. When he was leaving, he felt something strange on his back. He went home that day, fell to his knees praying, and things have never been the same.

Minister Smith serves on Mt. Pleasant's Missionary Ministry, visiting various nursing homes,

namely Fair Acres, Belvedere, and Prospect and, when needed, preaches sermons there. During the Christmas season, the missionaries give out tee shirts, socks, underwear, and snacks to the nursing home residents. In addition, because of the great medical supply needs in Africa, the Missionary Ministry is sending bandages to the Congo.

Minister Blane is also assigned to the Prison Ministry at Mt. Pleasant. He has a passion for youth, has talked to kids about Jesus at the Delaware County Juvenile Detention Center in Lima, PA, and is in the process of resuming his mentorship credentials. The boys' and girls' basketball coach in Chester also has a basketball team in his neighborhood called "Dipset."



Rev. Bernetta Congo grew up in Wilmington, DE, but spent every summer with her aunt and minister uncle on their farm in Maryland. Her aunt told her that she'd be a missionary because of her great passion for people, but when

she had an urge to become a minister, she always ran from it. Then an angel asked her, "If God called you right now, have you done all that He has asked you to do?" She said, "No". She thought that teaching was enough. Rev. Congo then went on to obtain Associate and Bachelor's degrees in Biblical Studies at Calvary Friends International University at the Satellite School at Calvary Bible Institute in Dover, DE. She also obtained a Masters of Theology degree from the

Jameson School of Theology, based in Philadelphia, PA.

Rev. Bernetta Congo became aware of Mt. Pleasant through her niece, Terry Ferguson, who was already a member of Mt. Pleasant. Rev. Congo brought someone to the New Beginnings group meeting and became acquainted with the group's leader Deacon Samuel Laury. She then became active with the group and began to counsel others. After joining Mt. Pleasant five years ago, she took Evangelism training.

In addition to teaching Sunday School every third Sunday at Mt. Pleasant, Rev. Congo serves as the Spiritual Advisor for our Missions Ministry, advising members how to share God's Word and care for others. Our missionaries travel weekly to nursing homes in Delaware County, PA and monthly to the Inglis House in Philadelphia to hold services, talk to the residents, cheer them up with singing, and give out gifts during the holidays. Some hope to do foreign missions one day.

Rev. Congo, a licensed practical nurse (LPN) for 56 years, is warm, caring and very conscious of the needs of others. She spent time researching for the Veterans' Administration, and was a member of the Gastroenterology Society, which focuses on the digestive system and its disorders.

The mother of two sons and an adopted daughter is the matriarch of her family. As such, Rev. Congo has taken a special mentoring position for her two 17-year-old great granddaughters, because she feels that it's important to teach the young by example.

Her favorite Bible verse is **Psalm 138:8**, The LORD will perfect that which concerns me: Your mercy, O LORD, endures forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands. (NKJV)

Mt. Pleasant Missionaries Participate in 3-Day Conference

By Laura Robinson

Over the summer, 13 missionaries from Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church traveled to Shippensburg University for a women's and girls' conference sponsored by the American Baptist Women's Ministries of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABWM of PA/DE). This was the second consecutive year that women from Mt. Pleasant have participated in the annual conference which allows them to connect with others, and be refreshed and restored by the Holy Spirit.

"We went hoping to get involved in missionary work outside of what we already do," shared Cheryl Jackson. "We met people who have gone out of the country and they told us about their mission work abroad in Africa, South America and the Caribbean."

Under the theme *Thriving through Restoration*, our team went hoping to improve Mt. Pleasant's Missionary Ministry in the Delaware Valley. ABWM of PA/DE has set a goal for this next year of raising \$15,000 to help construct two new classrooms at a nursing school in the Democratic Republic of the Congo so that girls can learn

how to become midwives and lower the risks of losing mother and/or baby during childbirth.

In addition to hearing from women who have traveled outside the country doing ministry, Micca Campbell, a national speaker with Proverbs 31 Ministries, gave keynotes each day. The author, who recently went through tough times after her husband was killed, spoke about how God brought her through. Young Baptist girls ministered, too, presenting a powerful skit about breaking the chains that bind us.

Saturday break-out sessions included a bandage-making workshop to learn how to make bandages out of used sheets to send to Africa, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean to help the wounded and sick. *Hole in My Soul* focused on addictions and how we can

overcome them. A choir workshop brought women, including some from Mt. Pleasant, together to minister to conference attendees in song at the Sunday morning Communion service.

Our group came away feeling refreshed and revived.

"Maybe we can't go to another country, but we can help on this end," Jackson said, "and we will."



Pictured at the conference are (front row l. to r.) Yvonne Crews, Mary Bannister, Eleese Elam, Cheryl Jackson, Michelle Robinson and Eula Weathers (back row l. to r.) Anita Snell, Laura Robinson, Rev. Bernetta Congo, Shirley Myers, Mary Ann Box, Eartha Barley and Inez Jones

Male Caregivers Step Up to the Plate

By Gwen Owens

According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), 40% of all caregivers these days are men. That's nearly 16 million men caring for a sick spouse, mother or other loved one either by choice, obligation or necessity. While male caregiving is growing in popularity, unlike their female counterparts, experts say men are less likely to open up to others or ask for help when they feel stressed or overwhelmed by caregiving responsibilities.

"Oftentimes, people are tired, burned out, frustrated, confused and they don't know what to do or where to go," shares Louis Colbert, Vice President of Operations at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging.

He and Trindy Grundy, leader of Mt. Pleasant's Caregivers Ministry, recently helped organize a men's caregiving support group session for men from Mt. Pleasant Bap-

tist, Philadelphia's Penn Memorial Baptist, and Sharon Hill's First African Baptist churches. AARP taped the session and produced a short video, highlighting Philadelphia-area African American male caregivers opening up about their thoughts and feelings. That video is on AARP's national website.

"You think you're the only one, but a lot of men are doing it," shared Deacon Ted West, one of a handful of men from our congregation who participated in the video. For several months, he's spent five days a week caring for his 90-year-old mother who has health and memory issues, taking care of her needs and keeping her safe. He said that it was powerful to come together in a public setting with men of all ages and scenarios who are caring for loved ones and acknowledge that they're handling it in the best, loving way.

"There's a stigma in society that black men don't do anything, but we do," Ted said. "We need to learn how to share with other men but, if not,

realize that there is someone who will always be there for us and that's God."

Mt. Pleasant caregivers, both male and female, meet the third Wednesday of each month from 4:30 pm until 6:00 pm in the LBB Room. However, the next meeting on October 18th will start at 4 pm because it is the ministry's annual Open Enrollment Session for health and drug plan comparisons.

"Everyone should take the opportunity to see what their 2018 health care costs will be for premiums, copays and prescription drugs," advises Trindy. She encourages caregivers, past and present, to attend, especially men. After all, support does matter!



Women's Ministry

What's coming up for Kingdom Women's Ministry? Mark your calendars and join us for a fun Fall calendar of events.

- **Saturday, October 21st** – Women's In-House Conference with special preacher/workshop leader Rev. Elaine Saunders. Music provided by the Carol Sisters from Chester, PA's St. Luke Community Christian Church
- **Saturday, November 18th** – Women's 2nd Annual Fall Harvest Festival – Join us in being a blessing to others
- **December** (Date TBD) – A very special evening of walking through the scriptures with strong women of God. Don't miss this holiday blessing.

Guess Who?

This picture was taken decades ago. She still walks among us. If you think you know who this lovely one is, email your answer to glonews@aol.com.



No one submitted a guess for last issue's GUESS WHO, so, we'll tell you--it was Eartha Barley. She's still beautiful after all of these years!





Keep Your Eye on the Prize

By Sylvia Ficklin

Any student of history will acknowledge that the turbulent times we are experiencing not only in the world, but in our nation today is nothing unusual. This world is Satan's domain, even with his limited powers.

However, it is important that we keep our eyes on the prize and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ because all power is given Him. He will judge all - believers and unbelievers.

Remember, He has not left us defenseless. His children are His prized possessions. He has given us the gift and power of the Holy Spirit; the Word; His full armor; the Great Shepherd and the angels who watch over us. So, we must not live in fear even when Satan inhibits us (**1 Thess. 2:18; Rev. 2:10**). We must keep in mind that humans are not our enemies; it is Satan and his army that infect the hearts and minds of the unbelieving world.

Praise the Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit trumps (no pun intended) that

of Satan's evil spirit. This power that is within us, the Holy Spirit, helps us to understand God's ways and thoughts to make us more like Jesus. Jesus must be the center of our existence so that He influences everything surrounding it.

Hallelujah! Satan has been defeated. The cross broke his power and he is outraged. His quest, therefore, is to wreak havoc in this world and, as God's children, we are his targets. We must not live in fear but in victory. Remember that this world is not our home. We are just passing through. He has gone to prepare a better place for us.

Recently, I attended the funeral of one of God's children. Throughout her illness, her pain and suffering, her faith never faltered. During the period her friends were allowed to make remarks, I spoke from the perspective of victory and celebration because she was in a better place than we are – IN THE

ARMS OF JESUS.

Don't be alarmed by what is happening in our nation today: the resurfacing of hate, inequality, injustice, discrimination, greed, selfishness, and the quest for power. Always know that God has a purpose in mind. Nations come and nations go but the Word is eternal.

We have so much to look forward to: the Lords return and the crown of eternal life. His coming impacts our present realities.

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him.

James 1:12 NLT

PRAISE THE LORD

A Career in Nursing

By Rev. G. Joyce Bryant

In this modern age, traveling efficiency is marked by taking the shortest, easiest, and most direct route. However, **Exodus 14** documents that when Moses, guided by the God of Israel, led the Hebrew children out of Egypt, he didn't take them the short, most direct route that would have taken less than a week to get to the Promised Land. He took them the long way. This reminds me of my journey to becoming a nurse.

When I was young, my parents told me that the easiest way for me, as a black woman, to achieve success was to take the Commercial Course in school. I would learn about filing, typing and bookkeeping, and become a Clerk Typist for the City of Philadelphia. Somehow, I didn't receive that message.

After graduating from high school, I worked for one year, saved my money, and enrolled into Cheyney State College. I had enough money for one semester, living on campus. While there, I learned that I was eligible for financial aid, which I applied for and received for

the following semester.

I completed one year of college with fair grades in the Liberal Arts Program. Unintentionally, I took a 20-year hiatus to get married, have 7 children, and receive salvation. During that time, I dreamt that I was a nurse working in a hospital. I felt led to follow that dream, but the road wasn't easy. Since I had taken the Commercial Course in school, I lacked the Nursing School prerequisite of high school Chemistry.

Before applying to Nursing School, I had to take a high school Chemistry course. Although, I wanted to become a Registered Nurse, I took a free Licensed Practice Nurse Program and became a LPN instead. There were several bumps in the road to becoming an RN. The Nursing Program was extremely grueling and challenging. Plus, I had a teacher who was determined to fail me without telling me what I was doing wrong. I didn't have time to cry about it, I persevered, trusted and believing in God's promise that

He would never leave me or forsake me. (**Hebrews 13:5**)

I became an RN after graduating and passing the PA State Board of Nursing Exam. I had a wide range of experiences as a nurse, from working with infants and toddlers, working with patients with spinal cord injuries, and working in Geriatric Nursing. The last six years of my nursing career, I worked as a Public Health Nurse, caring for first-time pregnant mothers and their infant babies.

In comparison, becoming a clerk typist would have been much easier. However, a career in Nursing was very rewarding. Not only did it pay well, but it offered many opportunities for me to branch out in almost any direction I wanted to go in the health field. Most importantly, I was helpful to others and a blessing to many.

The way may be difficult, "...don't cry about it...go forward." (**Exodus 14:15, RSV**)

Spotlight on Campus Ministry

By Brenda Tildon

The ministry spotlight shines on our Campus Ministry Team which recently did a spectacular job of presenting an Ice Cream Social for our college and high school students that turned out to be a wonderful mentoring opportunity. They covered topics such as "What to Expect in the 1st Year of College", "How to Deal with Being Away from Home", and, most important, "When to Say No". The Campus ministry, chaired by the dynamic duo of Enrique and Joan Josephs, is assisted by Donna Lowrie, Tara and James Harper and myself. For the August social, the Josephs' son, Enrique Jr. (EJ), even lent a hand.

"I thought it was great," said EJ, who served as the facilitator for a panel discussion with current college students and recent

college graduates. Panelists included Tyler Thomas (Delaware State University), Briyanna Williams (Delaware County Community College), Samaje' Harper (Temple University), Barry Cook (University of Delaware), Ahmad Williams (Millersville University), DeVonte Brown (Temple University), and our Graduate Student, Kayla Owens (West Chester University). They covered everything from how to handle roommates, time management, partying, sex, peer pressure, and much more.

"Students need to understand that their decisions have consequences whether positive or negative, and those decisions can affect the rest of their education," shared EJ, and even their lives. "The messages given, the stories told, anybody can take away and learn from. I think they (high

schoolers) were listening," he said.

Apparently so, since several had many questions to ask about what lies ahead for them. Navigating college can be a slippery slope if you're not grounded in what's right, what's wrong and how to say "NO!"

When it came to the social aspect, there was plenty of time for the young people to mix and mingle. Enrique, Sr. made the best milk shakes ever, along with all of the ice cream you could eat, which was a big hit!

Look for a lot more from this ministry as we seek to stay connected to and be supportive of our Mt. Pleasant students.



Kids Korner

By Shannin Danquah

The Children's Church Ministry is FALL-ing forward with several activities for our Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church (MPBC) youth. Make sure to save the dates and mark your calendars.

On Friday, October 13th we will have our *Annual Sleepover* for children 3 -12 years of age. All little ones who attend must be potty-trained. Drop off is at 6:00 pm. Please be on time as we will fellowship at Betty's Fun Center from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm before returning to the church for a night of food, fun and fellowship. The cost is \$5 per child and transportation will be provided. Every child must be registered and have a completed waiver filled out by a parent or guardian in order to attend. Pick up time for all children is Saturday morning, October 14th at **8:00 sharp!**

On Tuesday, October 31st at 6:00 pm we will host *What Would Jesus Do (WWJD) Night*. Since this night is our community outreach, we invite all of our MPBC children to bring a friend, classmate, family member or neighbor to join us for a free night of fun! *WWJD Night* is our alternative to Halloween so we encourage our children to spend this night playing games, eating tons of food and candy all while reflecting on what Jesus has done for us and how we can teach others who may not know him just how awesome it is to worship him.

Children are permitted to wear costumes but we ask that costumes NOT be demonic, gruesome, or dis-pleasing to Jesus. Children of all ages are welcome to attend and must be signed in and out for this event. Volunteers are needed and can come on the night of the 31st to lend a helping hand. Candy donations are also being accepted and can be dropped off in the church office.

If you have any questions about Children's Church or any of our activities, please email: mountpchildschurch@gmail.com.

Can't wait to see ya there!

Miss Newsy



Mt. Pleasant has many entrepreneurs and stars. One of our stars has been working on a start-up and managed to get funding from

the prestigious Founder Institute of Philadelphia, the world's premier idea-stage accelerator and startup launch program. The program requires budding entrepreneurs to go through a rigorous application and interview process. Many who apply do not succeed.

Our own **Vallory Clardy** is a success story. She's among the very best to be selected after presenting her start-up idea, explaining the complete program, and answering all questions. Now that

she's enrolled, she will go through training, work with a team of mentors, build her own team, secure her first customers and raise those all-important funds. Congratulations, Vallory! We look forward to hearing more good things from you.

One of our members recently left her husband, son and home to travel across the country by car with a girlfriend, seeing 21 different states in 36 days. Deaconess **Joan Josephs** calls it the most freeing experience of her life to see what else is in God's green, beautiful country. So many people in places like Montana, Wyoming, Iowa, Nebraska, Idaho and Utah, she says, live the simple life with much less than we have, yet we are constantly trying to acquire more.

As a result, she's grateful for what she has and no longer sweats the small stuff. Oh, and of course, she's glad to be home.



Mt. Rushmore in South Dakota

When God Says Yes By Jonathan Lee Walker

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. Through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. **2 Corinthians 1:20 (NIV)** This scripture tells us that God says, "Yes" to our prayers. God has made many promises in the Bible for you and me. My favorite scripture that reminds me of his promises is **Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)**, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

When we say "Amen" after our prayers, we are glorifying God with our very own lips. With our lips, we pray to God asking and petitioning Him for our wants and needs. Then we say, "Amen". We thanked Him right there. In that Amen, we said that we know that God will get us that new job, help us get that car, heal us of our sickness, restore our mind, and give us the power to love

ourselves again.

God wants the best for His children (you and me), but we are lacking confidence in our Amen. In our Amen, we give power to the yes we received in our answered prayer. What we do in the next seconds with that yes is crucial.

Will we walk with faith, believing that our life is divinely guided? In order to do so, we have to believe that the Creator is functioning on our behalf and will do the rest. With our yes, our answered prayer, we have to know that we've stepped into a glorious future. Stepping into our future self, we must have determination, and power with our words about God and how He is functioning in our life.

Mark 9:23 says that all things are possible for he who believes. Faith in God who brought us where we are today will be the key to moving forward in our yes.

When our Amen is as strong as our faith, then our yes will manifest itself, because God has already said yes. God is now waiting on our Amen to match our faith. Faith gives our Amen power to see the yes, because faith is like a gift wrapped in a box, and the Amen is the bow.

Untie the bow, rip through the paper, open the box, and receive your gift of answered prayer. Confidence in our Amen gets us closer to our yes, because God says, "Yes!" The question now is -When God says, "Yes", will we say Amen?





Family and Friends Weekend



Family and Friends Weekend



As an educator, what are the top tips that you can give our young scholars to ensure that they have a successful school year?



Jonathan Walker: KIPP West Philadelphia Charter Prep Charter School, 8th Grade Math Teacher

Follow the teacher's lead and directions at all times, complete your homework nightly, participate in class, make sure you're not talking when the teacher is--show respect, take risks, and be willing to be wrong.



Maurice West: School District of Philadelphia, Director: Office of Attendance & Truancy

Plan and have a daily schedule, study at least two hours a day, apply yourself, ask for help when needed, and prioritize your day: school, work, social life, family.



Kevin Owens: Glen Mills Schools, Resource Manager & Head Football Coach

Establish a routine to help you stay organized, put your cell phones away, do homework and studying away from the TV and other distractions, don't procrastinate or let extracurricular activities come before your school work, and always do everything as unto the Lord.



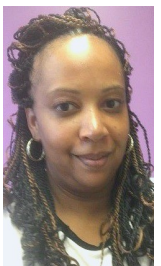
Rose Bennett: Huntington Learning Center, Reading and Math Tutor

Always be prepared, be certain to do your best on classwork and homework and, above all, stay focused and ask God to help you make the right choices that will help you succeed.



Connie Boswell: Kenderton School (K-8), Math Coach

Get a good night's sleep, eat a good breakfast, help a classmate if you can, be a positive role-model, and show respect to your administrators, teachers, staff, and yourself.

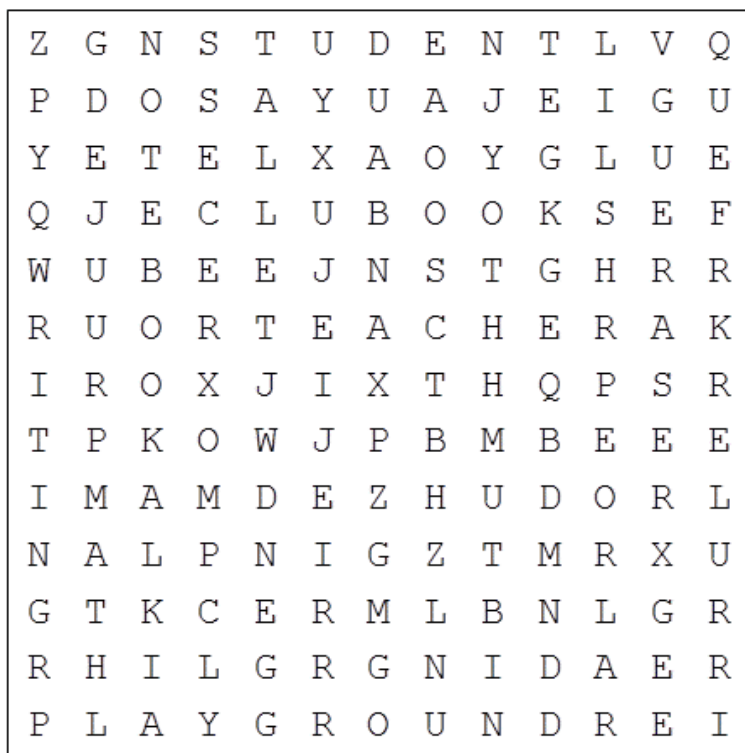


Tammy Barber: Chester Upland School District, Elementary Schools, Reading Specialist

Communication is essential. If you are having trouble with a subject, please say something before it is too late and get tutoring if it is offered. Read, read and read. Do not compare yourself to others, find your strengths and hone in on your strengths, pray and ask God to help you each and every day.



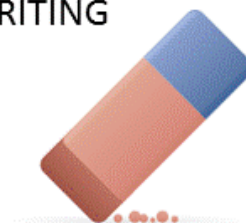
Back to School



BOOKS
DESK
ERASER
GLUE
LUNCHBOX
MATH

NOTEBOOK
PAPER
PENCIL
PLAYGROUND
READING
RECESS

RULER
STUDENT
TEACHER
WRITING



Study Abroad is Possible

By Kathy Crews-Williams

With a new school year underway comes another year of opportunity for students of all ages, including study abroad opportunities and the benefits that they offer. Study abroad programs are educational opportunities in a country other than your own. These programs involve traveling to foreign countries to live and study different cultures and are offered to high school, college, and graduate students. The benefits of studying abroad include but are not limited to: the chance to experience a different style of education, personal growth, intercultural development, education and career attainment, as well as personal and social benefits.

If you think you can't afford to study abroad or to pay for your child to do so, don't let the costs associated with traveling to another country deter you. While there are certainly expenses, there

are also funding options, mainly scholarships, financial aid, and loans.

My son, Corey Crews-Williams, who is currently a junior at Penn State's School of Earth and Mineral Sciences, studied abroad this past summer in both Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania (6 weeks) as well as Reykjavik, Iceland (2 weeks). Scholarships and financial aid funded most of both trips, with private donations from family and friends, including Mt. Pleasant members, paying for the rest. His professors, financial aid and Multicultural Office officials were especially helpful.

"From my experiences abroad, I have learned many things about myself and the things that I value," says Corey. "In Tanzania, I had the unique opportunity of experiencing village life and conditions first-hand. In Iceland, I

was able to live and learn in communities committed to sustainability while having an adventure of a lifetime." He also hiked into geothermal heated hot springs and got up close and personal with glaciers and a volcano. As a result, he's now motivated to pursue education post-graduation and other opportunities abroad.

If you or someone you know would appreciate the benefits of studying abroad, understand that planning is essential. **Start now**, ask for help, and don't be afraid to seek multiple resources. Begin with talking to the people at your school who know about studying abroad such as guidance counselors and foreign language teachers, and have a conversation with anyone that you know who's done it. Get answers to all of your questions and do everything that you can to make your desire a reality.



Iceland



Tanzania

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