

Westlawn Youth Network News



December, 2010

New Programs Bring New Energy!

Energy! We have it! And it's because of our new programming! After almost a year of brainstorming, praying, and listening we have launched a whole new set of programs. Each one with a specific purpose:

DIVA Princesses (pictured above), a mentoring program, stands for Developing Inspired Virtuous Ambitious Princesses.

IPlan to Be a Man challenges boys to prepare to be men by learning the 7 ingredients of manhood.

Open Gym provides a safe, structured place for children to play after school.

Girl Scouts builds courage, confidence, and character to make the world a better place.

Imagination Station encourages pre-k through 1st grade students to use their imagination in creative games and exercises.

Homework can be a challenge! This is why the staff offers **Homework Help!** a program specifically designed for homework time and tutoring

Junior High Club encourages students to become leaders in 5 Core areas: Physical, Social, Mental, Spiritual, Cultural.

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Directors' Corner

Fifty four years ago Westlawn Gospel Chapel was planted in North Lawndale, a westside Chicago neighborhood, fully in the throes of an ethnic upheaval known as "white flight." From 1950-1960 the community changed from "white" to "black." Businesses and services left almost entirely by the 60's and 70's. The 80's brought a book about the neighborhood entitled, "America's Milestone-An Examination of the Permanent Under-class". And finally by the 90's, Lawndale was considered one of the "forgotten" inner city neighborhoods in Chicago.

Throughout these decades of upheaval and change, Westlawn Gospel Chapel has continued as a lighthouse and signpost of the Kingdom of God! Starting with neighborhood bible studies and then expanding to Awana Programs, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and summer camps. All of these eventually grew into a comprehensive youth program called Westlawn Youth Network.

We are so grateful for your support over the years! You, through your prayers and resources, have been a part of what God has done and continues to do here on the West Side of Chicago! Thank You!

After 20 years of serving together, we (Derrick and Mark) are more excited than ever to look to the future with our staff, which is a mixture of veteran, new, and neighborhood youth leaders! We hope you will enjoy the new WYN Newsletter, which will better communicate what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how you can continue to help!

A very special Christmas blessing to you from all of us here in the city and neighborhood we call home!

Derrick and Mark

Co-Executive
Directors
WYN



High School Retreats provide a space for students to connect, reflect, and plan as developing leaders.

Camp Champ, a returning program, ties all ages together as College Students and High Schoolers act as leaders and junior leaders in a two week training and a vibrant four week summer camp for neighborhood youth.

Not only do our new programs bring energy, they also develop leaders. And that is exciting!

Meet our New Staff Person

Amy Jo Dawes joined the Westlawn Youth Network Staff in October of this year, and already she has brought energy and excitement to the team. Originally from Wabash, Indiana, Amy now makes her home in North Lawndale and attends Westlawn Gospel Chapel. Amy has a B.A. in Christian Education from Taylor University where she focused her studies on working with young women in an urban context. Amy is passionate about youth ministry and the North Lawndale Community. She is heavily involved with all current programming but has a special interest in mentoring young girls. We're excited to see how God continues to use Amy's gifts and talents on the WYN team.



Amy J. Dawes



Thank You!

We would like to take a moment to say thank you to the many people who have partnered financially with this ministry. Some of you have been giving to this work since its beginning. We can't tell you what your support means to us, and how much it encourages us to continue. We always make sure to steward your resources wisely. Thank you for being a part of youth leadership development for over 20 years! The fruits are evident! May God bless you as you have been a blessing to others!

Looking to the Future

From summer camps to youth mentoring, we know God has accomplished much in our past. We also believe He plans to continue the work for the future!

We need people to partner with us as we move forward. People who believe in youth leadership training, and who passionately want to see the youth of our neighborhood develop emotionally, culturally, socially, physically, and spiritually.

Is this you? Now is the time you can impact WYN most! A year end gift can greatly affect our vision for the coming year. Would you consider a gift this month?

Thank you for believing in the youth of North Lawndale!



Spring Staff Retreat 2010

Giving Information:

Checks Payable to:
Westlawn Youth Network
P.O. Box 695
Bellwood, IL 60104