



HL Selected for Foundation Center's
The First Steps, Next Steps Program for Second Year

For the second year in a row HarlemLive is partnering with **The Foundation Center**. Part of a two year program Funded by the Clark Foundation, it is working with about 20 emerging non profits towards sustainability. Last year the program was entitled the "Fundraising Consultant Network." HarlemLive was matched with Harlem resident Michelle Hodges.

In a sidebar article featured in The Foundation Center's 2002 annual report, Michelle Hodges said, "I've been able to assist HarlemLive in assessing its strengths, developing a strategy for securing support, and engaging in targeted prospects and research that will hopefully result in productive partnerships in the future."

At the conclusion of last year's efforts, JuWon Choi and others at the Center decided to change the format which evolved into "The First Steps, Next Steps" program.

The initiative is designed to build the organizational capacity of up to 24 small to mid-sized nonprofits. Participating organizations receive eight day-long training sessions on topics related to fundraising and capacity building. Between workshops, participants, with the assistance of a pro bono consultant, complete related assignments that help them accomplish tasks necessary for successful fundraising and also serve to reinforce their understanding of the topics they have studied.

Each organization is asked to work with their board members in completing homework assignments such as completing an assets inventory and taking steps toward increased sustainability.

Since we started with the program in October, HarlemLive has made progress in building the structures needed to attract additional funding. Most significantly, our foun-



dation consultant identified an administrator, Cynthia Simmons, who has worked with us the past few months pro bono to help create a revenue stream and to lend support towards creating the structures needed to move forward. Michelle and Cynthia assisted us with writing a grant for Bloomberg that was funded.

The following initiatives are underway:

- A team has been assembled to work on web sites for outside organizations and revenue has already been generated
- We have identified four key staff positions – Program Director, Administrative/Development Director, Program Assistant and Administrative Assistant – and have begun drafting a capacity grant that we hope will provide us with the resources to fill them
- At least 20 funding sources have been identified and we are creating a calendar of action
- We have revived our Newsletter, which will be published bi-monthly, to communicate with friends of HarlemLive
- We have assembled an Advisory Board which began meeting in October

The program runs through May 2004.

HLDesigns is Born



HL Alum Melvin Johnson came to us in October and stated it was time to give back. He and a few of the web savvy young adults wanted to put together a crew that created web sites on a consistent basis that would help them earn some cash but that would also benefit the organization that trained them. Up until then, many had done sites on an ad hoc basis but never in a concerted, organized way.

"I wanted to help generate funds. We keep depending on grants and we never know if they'll come through. We decided to take the skills we learned at HL and use them to help pay the bills. It also gives us a chance to practice being entrepreneurs and give jobs to the youth."

HarlemLive stalwarts, Justin Young and Shem Rajoon signed on and **HLDesigns** was born. At the same time, it was realized that there needed to be an administrator to coordinate their efforts. Once again, stepped in to assist us and is serving as coordinator for HLDesigns. Cynthia is serving as coordinator for HLDesigns.

They started out by taking on three small 'test' clients to see how the team worked together. They currently meet once a week to discuss progress on various sites and to meet with potential and current clients.

If you know of anyone that needs a site done at reasonable rates, please feel free to e-mail us at team@hl-designs.com or visit our website www.HL-Designs.com.

Adult Volunteers Come to the Aid of HL

We couldn't do it without them. Thanks to the numerous reporters and writers at Bloomberg, HarlemLive was able to meet a unique challenge this year.

Through a coincidence of circumstances and from recruiting mostly upper classmen in recent years, HL found itself divested of its writers who are now in college. This required an entirely new writing team which has built steadily over the past several months to over two dozen.

In past years, we had many veterans that could teach the new recruits and accompany them on stories. Lacking that resource, but rising to the challenge, our long time supporter and friend, Nina Siegal, who reports and writes for Bloomberg, organized over a dozen professionals to begin making their way uptown on the A Train. We now have several reporters coming to the HL newsroom on a regular basis, schooling the teens on writing leads, finding sources, techniques of interviewing and more. As well as teaching classes, the professionals mentor the

teens one on one with their stories.

"I think they're helpful to get a personal account on how to write specific stories and what you have to do to get your story done," said Editor in Chief Chris Davis.

HarlemLive is greatly indebted to the help by the volunteers. Our success and progress is largely based on their efforts.



In addition to the Bloomberg reporters, HL would like to thank its other volunteers who have been assisting our new editorial staff: Raqiyah Mays, Temma Ehrenfeld, Michelle Smawley, Erika Brice, Catherine ("Cat") Perry, and Tomika Anderson. In addition this year volunteer Michale Homolka has been doing a tremendous job with the video team.

Columbia Business Students to Work with HL

Getting picked seems to be a habit this year. As well as the selection by the Foundation Center (see article), HL was also chosen by the Small Business Consulting Program at the Columbia Business School to help with steps toward sustainability.

The Small Business Consulting Program ("SBCP") was established in 1998 by a group of Columbia MBA students seeking to complement their studies with the practical application of business skills and tools, while contributing to the local business community. SBCP works with entrepreneurs, non-profit organizations and other businesses in the New York City area to provide quality pro-bono consulting services in a broad range of areas, including accounting, finance, marketing, organizational development, operations, e-commerce and strategy.

The members of the team are Kwabena Ayisi, who is specializing in becoming a business consultant, Gravette Brown, who wants to specialize in business strategies, Romi McVey, whose interest is marketing and media, and David Seabrook who is studying entrepreneurship and who hopes to help small business raise start up funds after completing the program at Columbia.

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