



Issue: #2

January 2008

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SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER...

This winter we have had great opportunities to make the seasons bright:

MAKEOVERS: To start the season off right five girls were chosen for complimentary full makeovers by Thee Viron Roe at the Salon at Stanley Korshak.

PARTY: The holiday party for the out of care youth was a great success! On December 8th 30 TRAC youth attended along with their families, staff members, and volunteers came to the Church of The Incarnation. The party began with a blessing and a traditional holiday meal was served. After lunch there was a raffle and all attendees had an opportunity to have their pictures taken with Santa. As the event came to a close each TRAC youth received a tote bag filled with surprises compliments of The Church of the Incarnation and The Junior League of Dallas.

GIFTS: Beginning in October, TRAC youth submitted "Holiday wish lists" for themselves as well as their children. The lists included three items not to exceed \$50 each. We then sent out an email to friends of TRAC asking for sponsors to help give TRAC youth a memorable holiday season. The response was huge! The Junior League volunteers and other community volunteers were able to shop and wrap gifts for 162 TRAC youth and their children. Many thanks to the 42 individuals and corporate Angel donors who stepped forward to make this possible! Holiday dreams came true!

TRAC EVENT PHOTOS!

TRAC youth, staff and volunteers have been busy this winter. To see pictures of what they have been up to [CLICK HERE](#). If you have additional pictures of TRAC events please email them to maury@traconline.org

To all of our TRAC Angel donors:

Gracious thank you's from a few TRAC youth:

"Thank you for my Christmas presents and your kind hearts. I really loved it!"

"Thank you for everything, I really do appreciate it. Everything was so cute and fit just fine. It was like you knew me personally! Thanks so so much!"

"Thanks for my cool awesome gifts (especially that TV :)). Thank you, Thank you, Thank you."

"Thank TRAC and the Secret Santa for my gifts and making this a great Christmas. Thank you and hope you had a great year too."

"Thank you for the gifts I have recieved in 2007. You have blessed me with a great 2008."

Additionally, TRAC as a whole extends very special thank you to the friends, companies, church groups, and other social networks whose caring hearts went out to adopt deserving TRAC members for the holidays and throughout 2007. It is through the support of the community and people like you that we are able to continue providing a broad safety net of services to youth who are emancipating from foster care.

For more information on TRAC please visit www.traconline.org. TRAC is a program of Central Dallas Ministries, a 501(c)3 organization, so all gifts purchased for TRAC youth are tax deductible.

Upcoming TRAC events:

([CLICK HERE](#) to check our online calendar. Check back often for updates)

January 16th:

onTRAC: College Tour

January 19th:

Mentor Appreciation Event

If you are a mentor or have a mentor and would like to join us or for more information, please contact us as soon as possible.

C4t²

Meeting at Southwest Center Mall at 10 am (see below for more information).

February 9th:

onTRAC: Financial Literacy

onTRAC will prepare you to make smart choices for your future in regard to your spending, saving, and budgeting. Learn how to take control of your finances and ask questions you have about how to make your money work for you!

For information on locations and times please contact Erica Jones erica@traconline.org 214.370.9300



Ext 18.

March 18th:

TRAC's 5th year anniversary

Happy birthday, TRAC! Keep your eyes and ears out for details about this great celebration honoring TRAC and all of its supporters.

May 2nd-4th:

Sunburn Grand Prix

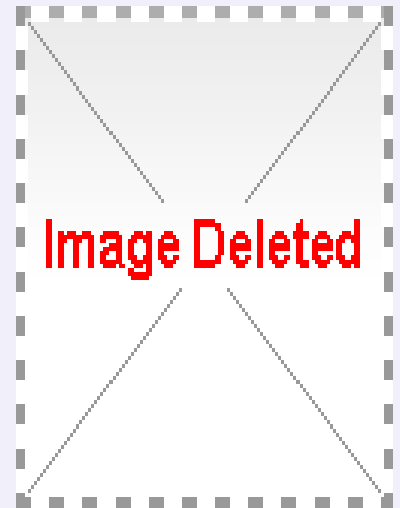
The Sports Car Club Association (SCCA) has team up with TRAC for the third consecutive year to bring a weekend full of action and fun at the Texas Motor Speedway. Please contact us if you would like to learn more about this event or to request a sponsorship packet.

For more information about any of the events please contact Maury Meekins at maury@traconline.org or 214.370.9300 Ext 27.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: LONNIE MIMS

Speaker at Helping America's Youth Conference

TRAC is proud to spotlight Lonnie Mims, a long time TRAC member, who was invited to speak at the Helping America's Youth's Dallas regional conference. Helping America's Youth is an initiative led by Mrs. Laura Bush; it's a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the challenges facing today's youth, particularly at-risk boys, and to motivate caring adults to connect with youth. Lonnie was asked to share challenges he has faced in life and the impact that caring adults have had as he has moved through the foster care system and to life on his own. Lonnie is a resident of TRAC's transitional apartments on Gaston Avenue. He is in school at Eastfield College and has been employed with Bank of America for over a year.



An excerpt from Lonnie's speech on the value of an adult caring relationship: "Well most of my life I've been separated from my family. I've been in and out of children's homes. My mother was always there for me - she would send letters or call me or sometimes come to visit me. The last home I was in had the biggest impact on me - not because of the program, but because of the people. There was this one lady named Ms. Betty. She was always there for me. Sometimes I wanted to call my mother and she let me use her cell phone just so I could talk to her. She even helped me with get ready and pay for my prom out of her own pocket. Ms. Betty was there for me no matter what. She introduced me into her family. She continues to help me so much that I am happy to say I love her. "

Lonnie credits the TRAC staff members as being mentors to him today, encouraging him and never giving up on him. He agrees that community volunteers can support and help youth make better choices that lead to healthier, more successful lives. TRAC offers a formal mentoring program to match TRAC members with caring community volunteers to support and facilitate the transition from foster care to adult living. [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about mentoring TRAC youth, and joining the community effort in Helping America's Youth.

[CLICK HERE](#) for information about the Helping America's Youth initiative.

"Caring adults connecting with youth is vital in the lives of our nation's young people, particularly at-risk boys, in helping them become healthy and successful adults." - Laura Bush

onTRAC: JOB READINESS YOUR JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP

A two part workshop was held at the TRAC offices on Thursday, December 20th and Thursday, January 3rd from 10 AM-3 PM. During the two days youth learned the importance of resumes and how to keep them up to date, how to actively pursue employers without becoming a pest, and tips for landing the jobs with good benefits.

"I went to both days because I liked it. It was fun and interactive and everything was in one place." - Jalisa

On the second day, applications from various surrounding businesses were brought in and the youth were guided through the process of completing them. They also has a chance to practice interviews.

"I am glad I went to the workshop, it helped having all the applications in one place. We just filled them out and turned them in." -Shay

Missed the workshop?

onTRAC: Job Readiness will have another seminar Spring Break.

Interested in more information?

Norma Gard, Job Coach
214-370-9300 Ext 20
norma@traconline.org

onTRAC: COLLEGE TOURS

Learn more about...

- Campus Activities
- Admissions Requirements
- Work Study
- Financial Aid
- Academic Support & More
- Dorm Life

TOUR DATES:

1/16/08- Texas State Technical College (Waco)
2/20/08 - Navarro College (Corsicana)

Groups will leave TRAC at 8:30 am.
Get onTRAC to College!

For more information please call Erica Jones @ 214.370.9300 Ext 13

APARTMENTS AVAILABLE!! - TRAC TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM

For former foster youth, finding safe, stable affordable housing can be a challenge. TRAC offers a flexible transitional housing program that is available for up to 18 months for former foster youth ages 18-24 who really want support and assistance as they transition to life on their own. Apartments are near downtown Dallas and public transportation, an ideal situation for those attending El Centro or working anywhere in the Metroplex. TRAC's focus is on offering opportunities to build independent living skills: help with budgeting, cooking, finding the right job and following through on other plans to reach personal goals. TRAC has resident advisors and coaches who are there to help when needed. Youth live in a group apartment initially and can move to their own one-bedroom apartment as fast as they can demonstrate they are ready for that responsibility. All living expenses are paid in the group apartment and then rent is subsidized for independent living apartments. To find out more about TRAC transitional housing, visit TRAC HOUSING. To apply for TRAC housing, contact Desi Cohn at TRAC, 214.370.9300 Ext 24 (toll free: 866.466.8722) or email desi@traconline.org.

GET INVOLVED: CHANGE FOR TODAY & TOMORROW-C4t²

Hello 2008 and to a GREAT NEW year for *Change for Today & Tomorrow!*

Our next Action Group will be Saturday, January 19th at 10 am.

This may be one of the most exciting groups we've ever had! We will not be meeting at TRAC on Saturday, but instead at Southwest Center Mall (formally known as Redbird Mall), 3662 W Camp Wisdom Rd, Dallas, TX 75237. We will all meet by the C4t² booth in the vendor area, then we will move into a community room at 11:30 am.

Children on the Mend, Inc., (along with others like K104FM!!!) will be hosting "Keeping the Dream Alive, Youth & Young Adult Empowerment Summit." Starting at 10am, we'll hear from a youth choir, and speakers Commissioner Price, AND SKIP CHEATHAM!!! If you haven't heard Skip speak before, just wait!

After listening to the choir and speakers, it's your time to go around to all the booths and network for C4t²! The booths will be all geared towards youth opportunities, employment, and involvement. This is something you won't want to miss!!!

After we have time to network, we will meet at the mall for an Action Group meeting with guest speakers, games, and GIVE-AWAYS! C4t² is ready to get going in 2008 and we need you there to talk about it!

[We need you on Saturday, January 19th at 10 am - 1 pm. Lunch will be provided!](#)

Sincerely,

Tiffani & Rusty

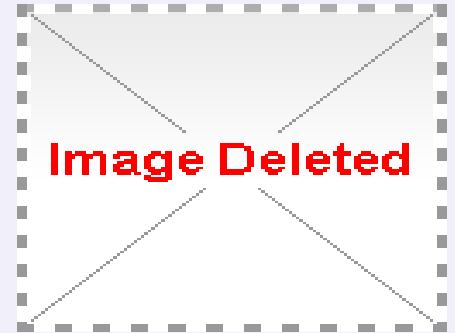
C4t² boasts of a promising future, helping those directly involved with the Youth Action Council and those who benefit by its missions and goals. Change for Today and Tomorrow will give North Texas youth a sense of belonging and an opportunity to develop leadership skills. Inevitably, we, current and former foster youth who know it best, can change Texas' Child Protective Services.

[PUBLIC SERVICE ANOUNCEMENT](#)

Have you seen TRAC's public service message? It was developed to help create awareness about teens in substitute care and to recruit mentors, foster families and adoptive families. It was produced for TRAC through the

[Design America Foundation](#) by [AMS Production Group](#) in Dallas.

We welcome others to share this video recruitment tool, which is currently being used across the country by groups addressing this issue. To learn how you can use this PSA in your community, contact Kelly at hello@designamerica.org



For more information:
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