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Issue: #5

February 2009

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TRAC Photos!

TRAC youth, staff and volunteers have been busy. To see pictures [CLICK HERE](#). If you have additional pictures of TRAC events please email them to [Maury](#).

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

TRAC NEWS

Dear Maury,

Last year was an amazing year for the TRAC program! Here are a few highlights from our work in 2008:

- 768 unduplicated youth received TRAC services!
- 601 received case management services;
- 250 attended life skills training classes;
- 45 were matched with mentors;
- 43 lived in TRAC's transitional housing apartments;
- 20 stayed in TRAC's emergency shelter apartment;
- \$250,000 in direct financial assistance was distributed;
- 250 volunteers made all of this possible!

Many thanks TRAC's volunteers, donors, neighbors and staff for a wonderful year. We offer special thanks to:

- Our fall semester intern **Deshunda Stafford**, UTA Graduate;
- **The Links Inc.-Dallas Chapter**, which has been working closely with TRAC's youth to teach them that learning and education can be fun!
- **Dallas Mavericks Foundation** for sponsoring monthly college visits for TRAC youth. [CLICK HERE](#) to see our calendar of scheduled visits.
- **Dallas Council of Jewish Women** for working on a women's health initiative for our young ladies.

TRAC is pleased to welcome four new members of its staff team:

- **Tameka Caldwell** (Training Director) was formerly the Program Director for Arrow Community Crossroads, a program of Arrow Children and Family Ministries in Houston.

- **Ben Hester** (Contracts Manager) who is retiring from seven years of active duty in the Army with a military career in logistics, administration and government contracts.
- **Cass Solis** (Independent Living Specialist) joined our team after relocating to Texas. While living in Seattle, she had extensive experience in social services, including treatment foster care.
- **Tomeka Thomas** (Independent Living Specialist) joins our team with much foster care experience. She has years of work with foster care agencies and worked with transitioning youth while living in New Orleans.

2009 promises to be an even greater year for TRAC, and we look forward to your partnership and support as we launch our plans for the new year!

TRAC Youth Spotlight: PAUL

Born in Greenville, TX, Paul had a rocky childhood. He entered Foster Care at age 8. After at least 6 different placements in 10 years, Paul "aged out" of the foster care system at 18. Paul found himself homeless and alone.

At age 20 Paul realized he needed to get his life together and that he needed additional support. In April of 2007 Paul joined TRAC in search of stability.

Since Paul has been a member at TRAC he has been committed to his goal plan. He entered TRAC's transitional housing program, which helped him get on his feet. Soon after moving in to the Ashby Commons apartment complex, Paul found a job! Now in his own apartment, Paul has managed to maintain his employment and consistently contribute to his savings account.

With his newfound stability and security, Paul has found freedom to venture out and enjoy life, particularly going to movies, playing games, listening to music and talking with friends. Paul now has the tools and the motivation to strive toward success; he plans to either become a video game developer or a psychiatrist.

Paul has also chosen to have a TRAC mentor to help guide him in this transitioning period. His mentor says, "Paul is an intelligent, self-motivated young man that I enjoy hanging out with. I especially enjoy his witty sense of humor; he has a knack for cracking me up on cue."

Paul was recently featured in Central Dallas Ministries' Newsletter, [CLICK HERE](#) and go to page 7 to hear Paul talk about TRAC and the Housing program.

To learn more about how you can help other young adults like Paul, please email [Maury](#) or contact her at 214.370.9300 ext. 27





A LETTER FROM THE DESK OF TAMEKA:

Hello Friends of TRAC,

I am thrilled to be joining TRAC and heading up the Training and program. TRAC has added some new and exciting "Post-PAL" classes this year, which are available to youth 16 years and older who have completed the series of PAL life skills classes and are preparing to live independently. Below are samples of Post-PAL classes offered this year:

On TRAC Financial Literacy - TRAC uses portions of the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) curriculum in conjunction with practical and experiential activities to ensure young people experience an environment conducive to learning. Some topics covered in this class are financial planning, budgeting, banking, and credit. The class is 7 hours which can be completed in one 7 hour session or two 3.5 hour sessions.

On TRAC Employment - This 6 hour class is completed in two 3 hour sessions. The class will focus on skills necessary to get and keep a job. The following topics will be explored: How to identify and contact potential employers; How to successfully complete job applications, develop an effective resume, and establish positive initial contact with potential employers; How to conduct a job-winning employment interview; And how to be successful on the job... and keep that job!

On TRAC Transportation - DART will provide a 1-2 hour presentation of their services and how to plan a trip. Afterwards, youth will experience riding the DART bus, making a transfer, and riding the TRE (train) to and from Fort Worth.

TRAC also provides college tours for high school juniors and seniors, which include transportation and lunch. Youth will receive general information about admissions criteria for Freshman, as well as financial aid and scholarship presentations. During the day youth will have the opportunity to meet with faculty, staff and students, visit with representatives of many activities and organizations, and take a tour of our campus and housing facilities. We can schedule additional tours as requested.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thank you,
Tameka Caldwell
tameka@traconline.org
214.370.9300 ext. 23

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 28th - UT Dallas Preview Day

Interested in visiting UTD? We're providing transportation from TRAC and lunch... To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

March 7th - Texas A&M-Commerce College Visit

Interested in visiting A&M-Commerce? We're providing transportation from TRAC and lunch... To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

March 7th - PAL Tarrant County

Life skills classes offered every Saturday through April, 18th. You **MUST** sign up with [Debbie](#) before attending!

March 9th - Mentor Orientation, 6:00pm-7:00pm

Who in your life saw potential? Interested in Mentoring youth in and out of the foster care system? Come see what it is all about! RSVP to [Maury](#), 214.370.9300 ext 27 .

March 10th & 11th - OnTRAC Financial Literacy @TRAC

Your budget got you down? Come learn tips to make the most out of your money! To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

March 16th through 20th - Spring Break PAL Cedar Valley

Life skills classes offered everyday this week. You **MUST** sign up with [Debbie](#) before attending!

March 16th & 17th - OnTRAC:Employment

Unemployed or Underemployed? Come and learn how to get a job and keep it! To sign up, contact your service manager or [Norma](#) at 214.370.9300 x 20.

MARCH 18th- HAPPY 6th BIRTHDAY TRAC!!!

Celebrating our 6th anniversary, TRAC will launch it's new and improved website!

March 18th - Mentor Orientation, 6:00pm-7:00pm

Who in your life saw potential? Interested in Mentoring youth in and out of the foster care system? Come see what it is all about! RSVP to [Maury](#), 214.370.9300 ext 27 .

March 23rd & 24th - OnTRAC Financial Literacy @TRAC

Your budget got you down? Come learn tips to make the most out of your money! To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

March 25th - OnTRAC: Transportation

Having trouble getting around? New to the area? Learn how to navigate the DART system! To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

March 26th - TRAC Member Dinner

Come and join us for dinner and a program or fun learning experience on the last Thursday of the month! Mentors welcome! RSVP to [Maury](#).

March 28th - University of Texas at Tyler College Visit

Interested in visiting UT Tyler? We're providing transportation from TRAC and lunch... To sign up, contact your service manager or [Tameka](#) at 214.370.9300 x 23.

April 4th - Mentor Training, 9:00am-4:00pm

Make a difference! Join us to train to become an influencing voice in the life of a young person transitioning out of care. RSVP to [Maury](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE ABOVE EVENTS, VISIT OUR [CALENDAR](#) OR CONTACT MAURY BY [EMAIL](#) OR CALL 214.370.9300 EXT 27.

To all Friends of TRAC,
THANK YOU to our 2008 Supporters!!!

This your would not have been such a success with out each and every one of you!



To see a complete list of all our Partners, Donors and Volunteers
[click here.](#)

For more information:

Maury Meekins, Community Outreach Manager
maury@traconline.org

P: 214-370-9300 x27 F: 214-370-9305

Transitional Resource Action Center, a program of Central Dallas Ministries
www.traconline.org www.centraldallasministries.org

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