



METAMORPHOSIS
MARCH 2017

Blessings, Inc.
Preparing Children for Greatness!



January 2017

Happy New Year!!



At Blessings, Inc. we are so excited to move into 2017! We are thanking God for everything that happened in 2016 and we are believing Him for even greater in 2017! To all of our parents, we want to thank you for entrusting your children to us and allowing us to sow into their lives. We could not ask for better parents or children. We are excited about the new things that are on the horizon for Blessings, Inc. This upcoming year we will dream bigger, aim higher and accomplish more. It is our honor to continue to serve the community and we look forward to everything that 2017 holds in store for the Blessings, Inc. family.

Peace & Blessings,

Heather Haywood, M.S.
Executive Director

Board of Directors

One of our biggest accomplishments in 2016 was developing our new Board. A number of talented individuals joined our team and they have hit the ground running. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience from their respective fields and have committed not only to making 2017 the best year yet for Blessings, Inc. but to growing the organization so that we can increase the number of children we are able to serve, the number of communities we are able to impact and the number of community-focused programs we are able to offer. Please take a moment to meet our board:



Board Chair – Christina N. Pena, MBA



Board Vice-Chair – Sara Solomon, MPH RD



Board Secretary – Mark A. Fraser, B.S.



Board Member – Dashaya Kilgore
Program Director, Metamorphosis



Board Member – Tynesha Cofield, M. Ed.

This is just the beginning for this ever growing body of leadership.

Our Volunteers Rock!

We have to say a huge thank you to all of our volunteers. They have given their time and their talents, and they have donated their resources to ensure that all of our activities and programs are successfully completed. There is no way that we could do what we do without them. They are invaluable and it makes us proud that they have chosen to partner with us in serving the children. The best part of all is the bond that has formed between the volunteers and the children. It is one of dedication, love and respect.

While we are on the topic of volunteers, we would like to honor one in particular – Ms. Joan Lloyd Lendell. Ms. Joan has been with us since the beginning. She is a part of the foundation of Blessings, Inc. and we are stronger because of her. We love and appreciate her and everything she has done for us. We just want to let her and everyone else know that she is a huge part of our organization and holds a special place in our hearts.

Thank you Ms. Joan!



Thank you Ms. Joan! ❤️

Christmas Luncheon

This year, instead of our annual Christmas party for the children, we held a luncheon so that the children, their families, our volunteers and board members could celebrate together. We held a toy drive so that we would be able to provide gifts to each of the children. We not only received a number of toy donations but we received monetary donations as well. With these donations we were able to provide gifts to 29 children and our wonderful board members and volunteers donated all of the dishes that were served. In all, we had almost 45 people attend and we had a marvelous time celebrating the birth of Christ.



Secret Donor

Blessings, Inc was contacted by an individual that wanted to adopt one of our families for Thanksgiving and Christmas. She offered to provide a Thanksgiving basket and gifts for the children of the family for Christmas. The only condition was that she wanted to remain completely anonymous. The family chosen

has been with us for almost five years and there are three children, Jazcitty (12), Nathan (9) and Nylah (7). When we received the donations for both holidays, we were speechless. A Thanksgiving basket with a meal fit for a king was provided and for Christmas, each child received clothes, coats, pajamas, robes, slippers, toys and bikes. Our secret donor was a sincere blessing to this family; we are forever grateful.



Metamorphosis

In our last newsletter, we discussed the planning of Metamorphosis, our new program for teens in foster care. Well, our planning team has done an outstanding job and we are launching our first pilot cohort of ten teens in March of this year. We are so excited that this vision is becoming a reality. The amount of support that we have received during the planning process has been amazing. Our need for support continues as we are still in need of additional funding for the program. Please support our GoFundMe campaign at <https://www.gofundme.com/blessingsincmetamorphosis>. Every little bit helps so please consider making a financial contribution to this awesome endeavor.

Summer camp 2016 update

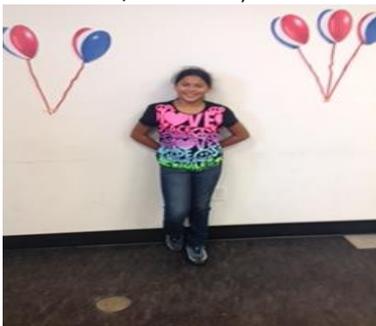
We were blessed to hold our third one-week summer camp this past August. A big thank you goes to the Hunting Park Recreation Center for hosting our camp and as always a big thank you to our volunteers. This was our largest camp to date with 61 children registered and 46 children in attendance. The children had a blast as we participated in VBS activities, played kickball, dodge ball, musical balls, capture the flag and minute to win it challenges, they completed various arts and

crafts projects and enjoyed a movie day. The planning has begun and we are looking forward to the 2017 summer camp. Stay tuned for the new adventures this year's summer camp will bring.



Election

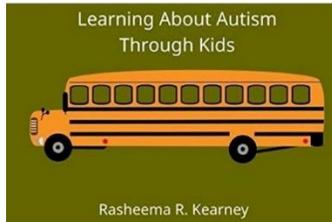
Each Saturday we begin our day by having Circle Time. This is a time for the children to talk about their week and share both good and bad experiences that they may have encountered. During this time, we also discuss topics that the children may hear on the news, and of course a big topic this year was the election. Often we don't realize how much children take in, so we wanted to see what their thoughts were about the election. After our discussion we split into two groups: the 5-9 year olds made their own voter registration cards and the 10-12 year olds (Kasson Bey and Jazcity Muniz) were our candidates who were running for president of Blessings, Inc. Our two candidates had to write a speech and then give it to the group. After that, everyone voted for the very first Blessings, Inc president. When the time came to give their speeches, Kasson had a little difficulty but Jazcitty stepped right up and helped him out even though they were running against each other. When it was time to vote, each child received a ballot to cast their vote. Kasson filled his out and then he balled it up, asking for another one. He then proceeded to vote for Jazcitty. These two can teach us adults a thing or two! We're so proud of them. Oh, and Jazcitty won!!!!



Learning About Autism

Rasheema Kearney visited us and shared her new book *Learning About Autism Through Kids*. Her book is a collection of short stories about Autism. She gives the reader the opportunity to view Autism through the mind of a child. It touches on the many characteristics associated with Autism and educates others on how to identify certain behaviors associated with the condition. The children enjoyed the activities Rasheema used to help them identify with children with Autism and they did not want her to stop reading. We look forward to Rasheema visiting us again.

Rasheema Kearney
Learning About Autism Through Kids



Thank You!

We at Blessings, Inc. would like to thank everyone that has supported us in any way and we look forward to starting the 2016-2017 year off with a bang. We will keep you updated with all of the new and exciting activities that will take place!

