

SPRING 1994

NEWS

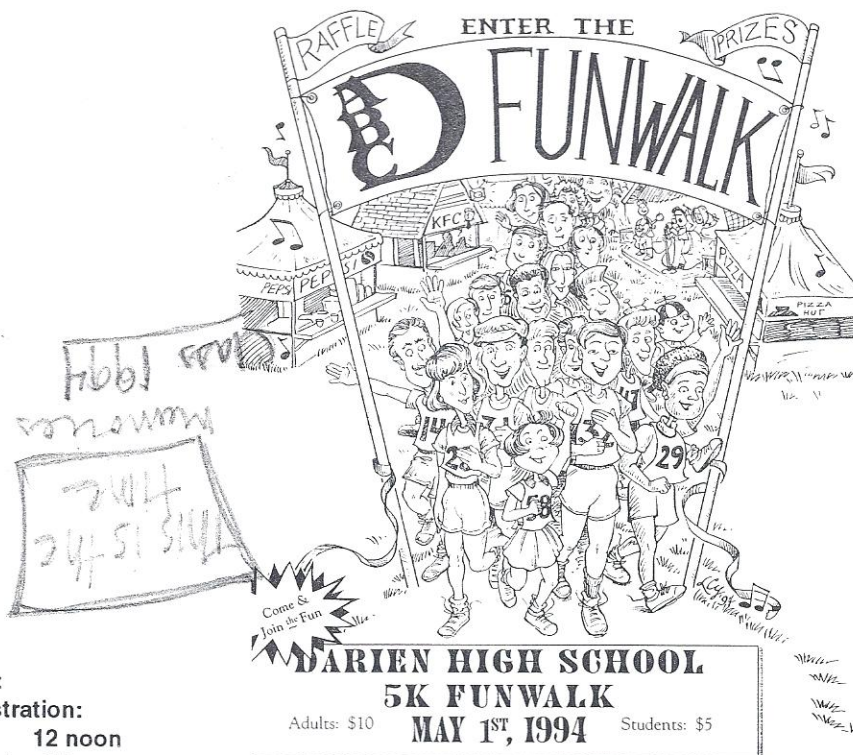
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A BETTER CHANCE IN DARIEN, Inc. P.O. BOX 3204, Darien, Connecticut, 06820

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29 Huckleberry Lane
Darien, CT 06820

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FUNWALK TO BE HELD AT DHS



TIME:
Registration:
12 noon
Aerobics Warm-up:
12:45pm
Start:
1:00pm

DATE:
Sunday, May 1, 1994

Get ready, get set to have some fun at the 1st annual ABC 5 kilometer FUNWALK to be held May 1st at Darien High School. The purpose of the FUNWALK is to raise townwide consciousness of the ABC program as well as to raise significant funds for the ABC treasury. People of all ages are encouraged to participate. There will be a live band, refreshments, and numerous raffle prizes including 2 round-trip USAIR tickets to any USAIR destination including the Bahamas, Puerto Rico and Bermuda, a CD player and dinners at many local restaurants. All FUNWALK participants will automatically be eligible for raffle prizes.

Pre-registration forms will be available April 1st at local merchants, businesses and all schools. If you would like to help with this event, or if you would like to be a personal or corporate sponsor, please call or write:

Chris Filmer
10 Harriet Lane
Darien, CT 06820
(203) 655-2445

PLEASE set this very important date aside, don your walking shoes and show your support for our wonderful ABC program. Your participation in this event will help make the FUNWALK a success, and we promise you will have a great time!!!

COST:
Adults \$10
Students \$5

PLACE:
DHS & surrounding roads

ABC IN ACTION

Eileen Conte and several other hard working board members were responsible for the annual ABC Tag Sale held this past October. Again it was a success, and remember, when you're doing your spring cleaning to think about your Tag Sale contributions for next fall.

The ABC girls and the Resident Directors, **Thad** and **Kathleen Coulombe**, have had a busy entertainment schedule including many distinguished dinner guests. Among those sharing in the good food and great company have been DHS Principal **Bruce Hall**, ABC board members **Chris Place**, **Pat McGarry**, and **Linda Thomas** and her daughter **Katy**. Board member **Shirley Patterson** came for dinner twice, once with her son, **Brian**, and once with a representative from **Inroads**, a group offering corporate internships and scholarships to minority high school and college students.

The annual ABC Christmas party was held December 12th and was well attended by the students, board members and their families. A Christmas musical medley was provided by the ever welcome **Tudor Singers**, and board members brought ornaments for decorating the ABC House Christmas tree.



Jackie and Danique were members of the high school cheerleading squad that performed during basketball games.



Fatima Ullah, Renata Alexis, Jackie Ferrer, Wendy Olivera and Danique Clarke

Renata and **Fatima** travelled once a week to Stamford to participate in the Big Brother - Big Sister program. They worked in an after school center for younger children and served as tutors, playmates and overall role models for the children.

Wendy and **Fatima** continued to take part in the Respect for Differences program at the High School.

Wendy participated in a panel on Diversity held at the Darien Library where she discussed the pros and cons of the Magnet School concept.

Cherie Greene took **Renata, Wendy and Fatima** to visit Syracuse and Cornell Universities, and **Connie Tallman** and **Jane Moloney** accompanied **Wendy and Fatima** to Columbia University....all part of the college search process.

A COMPUTER UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of **Annie and Kurt Feurman**, there are now two new computers in the ABC House.

A MacIntosh Quadra 605 and a Compaq Presario are up and running with word processing, spreadsheet and data base management systems. Both computers are linked to a HP Laser Jet printer and are equipped with internal modems which can provide future networking capabilities. The girls have already become familiar with the software and are putting this new technology to use!

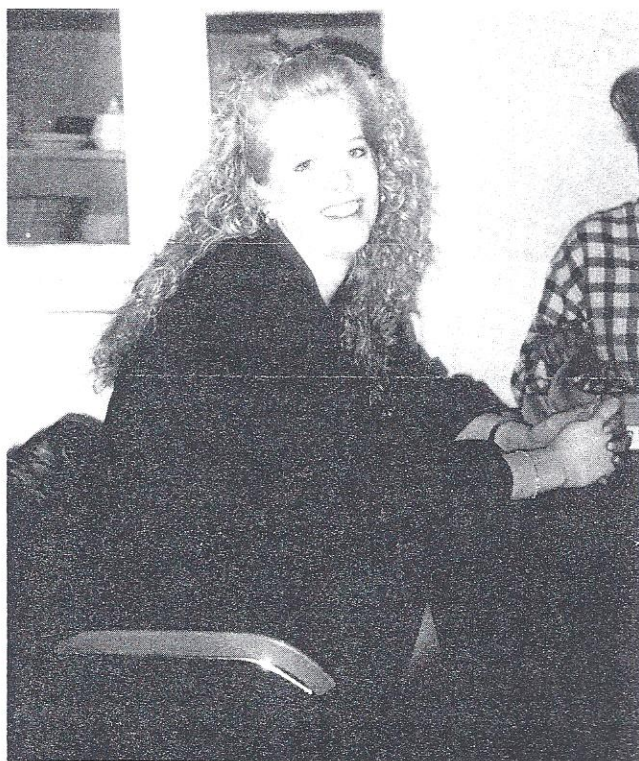


Renata, Wendy and Johan Emmery with new computer

FAR BEYOND THE ABC'S!

While it encourages the girls to take part in extracurricular and community activities, the ABC program is primarily about academics, and the standards are high. Students are expected to maintain a 2.6 grade point average their first year and subsequently a minimum 3.0 in the five academic areas of English, Foreign Languages, History/Social Studies, Math and Science. Our girls have always chosen challenging courses of study, and to insure that they are successful, ABC in Darien provides in-house tutoring during the mandatory study hours Sunday through Thursday nights.

We are fortunate to have two outstanding young people tutoring the girls this year — **Jeanine Signorelli** and **Tim Dutton**.



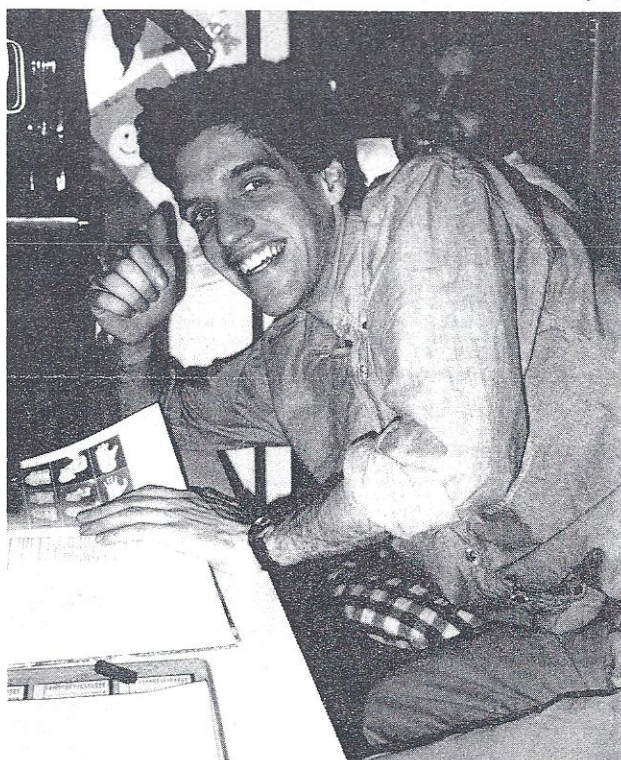
Jeanine, a senior at Fairfield University, became interested in working with inner-city students during her sophomore year in college. She began to tutor at Bridgeport's Harding High School, and by her junior year she was running a program at Harding that consisted of in-class and after school tutoring by Fairfield U. volunteers. Jeanine comes from a family with an academic background — her father is a high school English teacher, her mother is a librarian at SUNY at Stony Brook, and her older sister works as an outreach specialist.

Jeanine became a member of the Darien ABC program this past September. "The whole concept of the program is what interested me," she says. "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with such a bright and fun group of young women. I look forward to seeing them every night at study hall. Along with overseeing the studyhall, I also tutor the girls in English, help with college applications and hopefully (if I can find a free day) will show them some college life, like a basketballgame."

Jeanine will graduate this spring with a BA in English and would like to continue to work with a program like ABC.

Tim Dutton, a former and much-admired Darien High School Physics teacher, tutors the girls in science and math. Tim graduated with honors from Middlebury College with a degree in Chemistry and a teaching certificate to teach high school Chemistry and Physics. He was offered a job at DHS "even though I distinctly remember being self-conscious because I was wearing white athletic socks with a blue blazer in one of my job interviews."

Tim began his teaching career at DHS in the fall of 1989. "My choices in clothing never improved," he says, "and



I fondly remember all the friends and colleagues who helped me out during my three years teaching in Darien, especially the Filmers (past ABC president) who allowed me to live in their house during my first year here." Tim started tutoring at the ABC house in 1990 and has been a much appreciated contributor ever since.

In 1990, Tim left Darien High School to accept a teaching position at Harding High School. "The challenges are very different at Harding," he offers, "but for now, I am enjoying the urban environment."

We on the ABC board greatly admire and appreciate Jeanine's and Tim's dedication and the invaluable rapport they have developed with the girls. Their work is a big factor in the academic success of our ABC in Darien program.

1993-1994 Host Families

Wendy

Cherie & Ed Greene
Debbie & Tom Parnon

Fatima

Nancy & Bill Leroy
Jill & George Kassis

Renata

Susan & Dick Helstein
Betsy & Bob McGroarty

Jackie

Chris & Howard Place
Mallory & Conrad Weymann

Danique

Bonnie & Ron Brown
Jini & Bill Martens

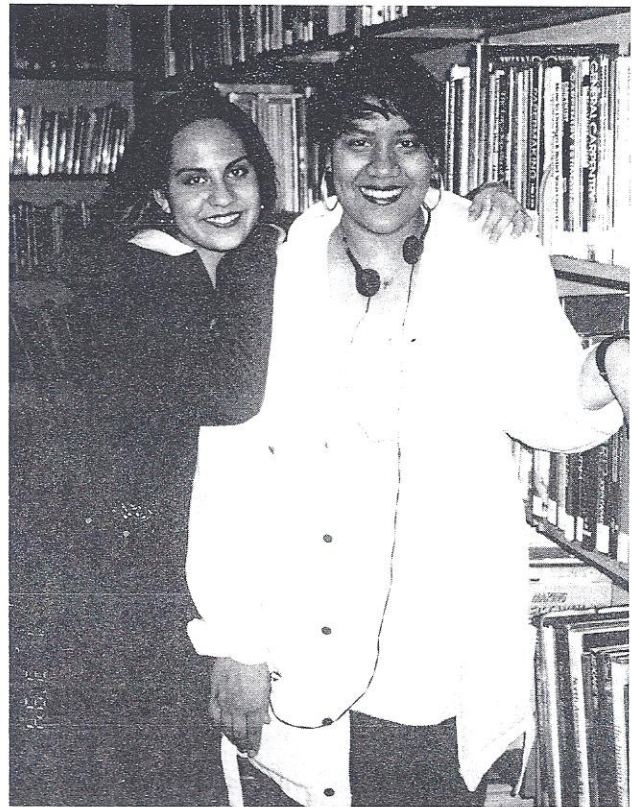
ABC GRADUATE MAKES NATIONAL NEWS

ABC graduate, **Deval L. Patrick**, has been nominated by President Clinton to be the Assistant Attorney General in charge of the civil rights division. If confirmed he will oversee a department of 250 lawyers and will have the ability to set the tone for civil rights litigation in the Clinton administration. Patrick, a Chicagoan, was from an impoverished family and lived in one of the most violent-ridden public housing projects in the country.

Through A Better Chance he was able to attend Milton Academy where he excelled academically. From Milton he went on to Harvard and Harvard Law School.

**A HEALTHY THANK YOU TO THE
DARIEN YMCA FOR DONATING
MEMBERSHIPS TO OUR ABC GIRLS
AND RESIDENT DIRECTORS.**

OUR DHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES



Wendy and Yolanda Marzan

The student representatives to the ABC board are vital members of ABC. Besides offering their friendship and support to the ABC girls, they also provide a much appreciated teenage perspective to the adult board members. They participate in many ABC activities, often provide transportation to the girls and encourage other high school students to get involved with ABC sponsored events. This year our Darien High School student representatives are seniors **Johan Emmery** and **Yolanda Marzan**.

RECOMMENDED READING

MAMA by Terry McMillan, a powerful novel about a Black mother who pushes her children so that they can achieve a better life than she has.

Your financial help is always welcome. To support the work of ABC send your contributions to A Better Chance in Darien, P.O. Box 3204, Darien, CT 06820