

DEVOS URBAN LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Issue 18

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2006

Doug and Maria DeVos love to give. Their heart of benevolence has generously impacted medical, education, urban and other community efforts since they established their own foundation in 1992.

As major donors to ministries and organizations the two have come to know and trust a number of hard working people in the non-profit sector – executive directors, grassroots advocates, and countless more – all seeking to improve someone else's quality of life.

While not everyone with well manicured missions statements and



Giving for a Living

by Gerald Bell

measurable programming gain access to donors like Doug and Maria, those who do have demonstrated there is much more to their work than making "the ask."



"Impact, action, results,"

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are in the right place, but to take it from that - to actual impact in a well-run well-established and organized operation - to helping people is an important thing. Impact is all about life change in an individual."

He and Maria admit their work in philanthropic giving likewise has to be about more than responding to "the asks" with approving or denying proposals. They believe just as important is the embracing of opportunities to volunteer, chair fundraisers, or serve as board members when possible. In turn this allows them to not only develop key relationships, but keeps them close to the work and experiencing the

(see Giving for a Living Page 5)

Hope Is Built in Kansas City

by Eileen Kooreman

The Hope Center was founded in 1998 with the mission of reaching and developing urban youth into world-class Christian leaders. The vision for The Hope Center was put on the heart of Chris Jehle (Kansas City 2001) and a group of volunteers who began developing relationships with kids from the inner city of Kansas City. Since those grass roots beginnings in 1998, The Hope Center has grown from meeting out of Chris' house to inhabiting a permanent facility that includes a multi-purpose room, meeting rooms, classrooms, kitchen and offices as well as ample parking and space for outdoor recreational activities. The best part is that this facility is in the heart

of the original neighborhood where The Hope Center had been located. They have six full-time and one part-time staff and dozens of volunteers who work directly with children in Bible studies, tutoring, and mentoring relationships. We caught up with Chris at the Christian Community Development Conference recently in Indianapolis and asked him to reflect on the key ingredients that helped him position the Hope Center for growth...

Chris: At the beginning the key



was to keep our focus on what we knew how to do - build relationships with kids and then target a small number of them to participate in our Leaders In Training program. Like our mission says, we wanted to develop urban youth into world-class Christian leaders. As we saw success in that area we began to attract more and more kids from the neighborhood. Eventually my wife, Tammi, came on board as well. We reached a point where each week around 60 children would participate in our programs and activities. More children wanted to join but there literally wasn't room.

DeVos: Thinking back to the Strategy, Capacity, and Relationships model, it sounds like your Capacity (see Hope is Built Page 6)

From the director...

Cultivating Donors

I am very familiar with the challenges of raising money for ministry in an urban setting. For three years I served as the Executive Director of a donor-based Christian School that provided educational options for low-income families. Providing such options meant that my board and I had to raise close to two-thirds of the school's annual budget.

To say that I was "green" when I began fundraising is an understatement. I had no prior experience and limited opportunities for formal training. Fortunately, I had a board member experienced in fundraising who became my mentor. He was affectionately known as "Coach Dee."

Coach Dee taught me many things about fundraising, but placed particular emphasis on donor cultivation. By

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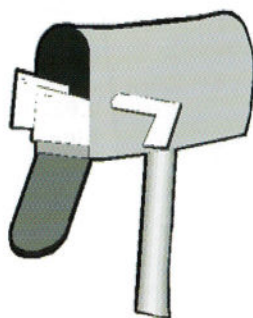
- personal contact with donors
- thanking donors quickly and accurately
- recognizing donors in ways they approve
- communicating frequently with donors
- inviting donors to special events
- demonstrating to donors how their support is making a difference

Coach Dee believed that if these activities were done consistently and effectively, three things would happen: (1) existing donors would stay involved, (2) donor support would increase, (3) existing donor base would increase.

This was a hard lesson for me to learn. Like a lot of urban ministries the school struggled to meet its monthly financial obligations. Dealing

with such pressure made it difficult for me to appreciate the value of cultivating donors. My focus was on raising money, not building relationships. But Coach Dee often reminded me, "Donors don't give simply because you have a need. They give because they believe in what you are doing."

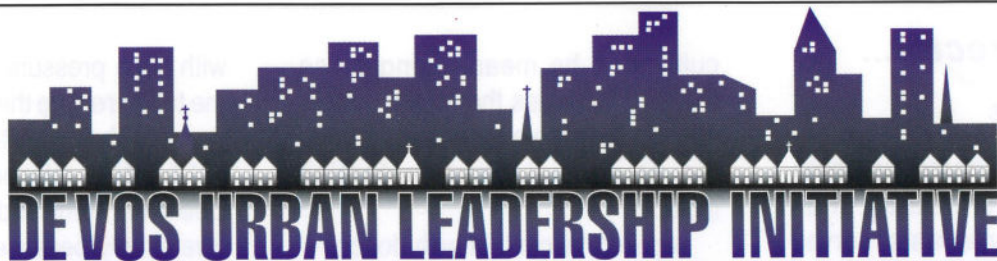
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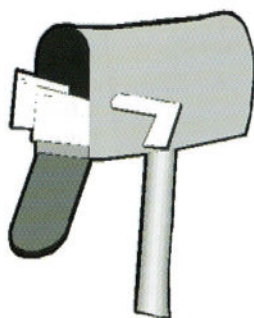
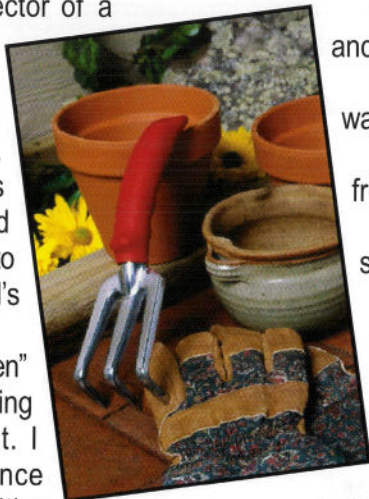
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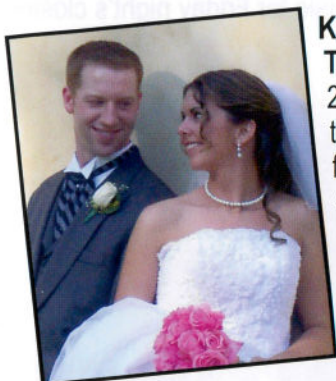


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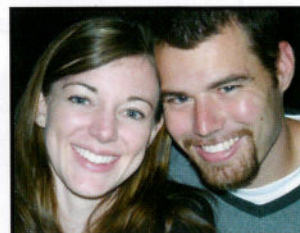
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"It was the most joyful experience in my life," said **Bryan Pontius** (Denver 2005) who wed Lacey Meister at First Baptist Church of Denver on July 30, 2005. "I tried to hold back the tears, but cried the whole time standing there until she got to the altar."



Kwinn (Halfacre) Tucker (Philadelphia 2004) will never forget the look on Stephen Tucker's face when she walked down the aisle September 10, 2005 at Church of the Good Samaritan. "He was so happy to see me," said Kwinn. The newlyweds spent 10 days in Maui for their honeymoon.

Damon Remigailo (Memphis 2002) and Heidi Feenstra were married September 24, 2005 in the neighborhood where the youth they serve reside. Along with family and friends, some 40 urban youth witnessed the exchange of vows by two people who had maintained their chastity. Damon said that made their special day more memorable!



In the News

Tony Wade (Memphis 2004) and his wife, Karen, now pastor Alcy-Ball Community Church. The first service was Sunday July 31st. Tony said they planted the church with the mission to, "Reach the lost, heal the broken, bring back the scattered and strengthen the weak."

Dr. Larry Lloyd (Memphis 2002) was inaugurated as the new president of Crichton College on October 22, 2005. We are so proud of you Larry!

Dwight Peace (Los Angeles 2003) has assumed Senior Pastor duties at South Hills Presbyterian Church in Pomona, CA. Dwight says this new role is great and has come with expanded opportunities to serve the community through local government partnerships.

Elgin Tunstall (Memphis 2004) accepted a Director of Urban Ministries position at Hope Presbyterian Church. Elgin is responsible for connecting this suburban based church to ministries in the urban community that need ongoing support. He'll also coordinate an annual urban mission's conference.

Domingo Mota (Los Angeles 2005) recently accepted a Youth Development Specialist position with Human Services Network. He said he's enjoying moving the organization into more programs that provide community resources for youth to develop their gifts and talents. I'm learning all that's available in the community and having fun, he said.

Jaye Hill (Detroit 2004) and wife Erika welcomed daughter Alexis Jamya into the world on May 28, 2005 at 3:20 a.m. She weighed 7 lbs 13 oz and is a cutie! Alexis is Jaye and Erika's first child.



Nicque Bradshaw (Boston 2000) and husband Philip recently adopted their first child, a baby girl, Hannah Rebecca. Hannah was born on November 21, 2005 weighing 7 lbs 13 oz. Nicque and Philip feel blessed that they were able to bring Hannah home from hospital just days after she was born.

Crossroads of the Rockies Church has appointed **Ryk Montoya** (Denver 2003) as the new director of their Compassion Ministry Center. He oversees the staff and directs programming and development. Each week 100 families are provided food and clothing and Ryk says serving people in this manner has been the highlight thus far.

George Williams (Kansas City 2001) accepted a part time Associate Pastor of Family Life position at CrossPoint Community Church. "I took the position to answer a call to the ministry and also to share in the mission of this multi-cultural church," said George who will oversee the ministries for children, youth and adults.



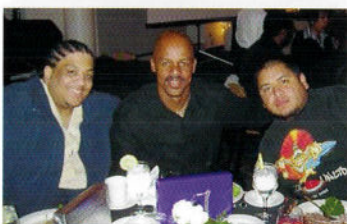
The class of 2005 "gathered around the good stuff" October 17-22 where instructors Peter O'Donnell, Chana' Edmond-Verley (Grand Rapids 1998) and John Barros delivered Systems Thinking in Holland, MI.

This was Barros' second year presenting his Dudley Street Initiative story, which continues to inspire and empower Initiative participants. The NC2 guest speaker line up included

Second National Conference 2005

Betsy DeVos, Wayne "Coach" Gordon, Bob Lupton, and Bob Vander Weide.

A special highlight was Grand Rapids' alumnus Kelvin Jackson (1998), Rick Rivera (2000) and Amy Westra (2000) who joined Gerald Bell (Kansas City 2003) to provide praise and worship for morning devotions and special music for Friday night's closing celebration.



Giving for a Living

(Continued from Page 1)

difference the agencies they support are having.

"It's nice to get the newsletters, or read about it in the paper, or receive a letter of thanks," Maria says. "But it's really the personal connection that you have." That makes Doug and Maria's role meaningful. She also adds, "I like to talk to the people. I like to hear how it's going from one person to another."

The youngest of Richard and Helen DeVos' four children, Doug recalls being introduced to the values of giving as a youngster in "church when mom and dad would give me money and say 'put it in the plate or take this to Sunday school.'" Maria and Doug both shared their gratitude and respect of the powerful example of giving his parents have been to them and to their children.

Doug went on to share how the DeVos family as a whole understands that, "really we're just stewards of what God has blessed us with. When you view yourself as the pass through vehicle there are resources that you can't explain. We don't fully understand why we've been blessed with so much wealth - but just to view it as a vehicle [to which] we have a responsibility."

A significant responsibility Doug and Maria have is to know where to draw to the line when responding to needs for funding. This means certain boundaries and standards at times have to be in place to ensure they are practicing the stewardship they believe God requires of them.

Among those standards (as in any relationship) is an agency or ministry's commitment to honesty. Doug stresses, "You have to be honest. You have to

tell [donors] what's going on. I think it conveys strength when you say we have a problem and we're going to do something to fix it...and that we need a little extra help so here's our plan.

Those are the things that give confidence even in a tough situation." They're convinced when the truth is expressed it grants exposure to the heart - and that's a quality they value in the relationships they've invested.

Often it can be easy for a fundraiser to embellish their program's status and the needs their organizations are facing. Doug and Maria encourage telling your story well - with clarity and focus. "The best examples are with those whose hearts are just fully in it and you can see it. They just ooze what they are doing," describes Doug. "They're prepared, they're sharp, they are not jittery, they're not on top of themselves and trying to really push something. They are just there telling their story."

Always approachable and willing to listen, Doug and Maria accept the fact that no matter how compelling the story or legitimate "the asks" (both formal and informal) some will be rejected. "I don't think there's some special magic when it comes to fundraising - it just takes work," advises Doug. "Get in front of somebody so you can make an appeal and be ready for rejection. They'll either say yes or no. And if they say no go find the next one."

"I don't think there's some special magic when it comes to fundraising, it just takes work."

Doug DeVos

"If you're the connect point you need to make sure you represent the organization and do it in such a way that you're telling the organization's story and it's all about the ministry,"

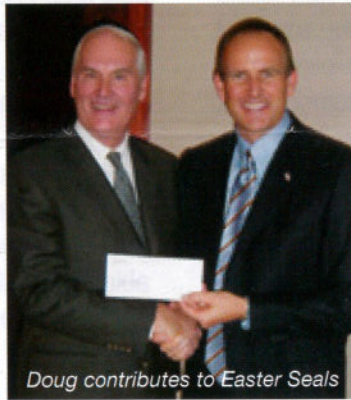
says Doug. "So if God calls a person somewhere else, the new person can come in and still facilitate that relationship."

Doug and Maria expressed that the ministry dearest to their heart is raising

their four children. From there, key partnerships with their local church and Christian school are among the faith-based investments that give them great satisfaction. Added to that list are the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative, Gospel Communications, and many small hands-on ministries meeting urgent needs of families and youth.

Be it offering valuable advice, honoring requests for funds or volunteering at a local agency, Doug and Maria can't fulfill their call as givers without partnerships with the ministries and organizations whose stories complete or compliment the mission of impacting life change in others.

"Giving is ingrained in us from actually watching mom and dad," offers Doug. "It's just a normal part of life. It's a fun part of life. They have fun doing it so we have fun doing it."



Doug contributes to Easter Seals



Maria (center) joins hurricane Katrina relief team

Hope is Built

(Continued from Page 1)

needed to grow. How did you go about getting the resources you needed to take the program up a notch?

Chris: Looking back now, I can see that so much depended on the Relationships circle of that model. Several years ago, we started a campaign to get a building. At the time a board member generously donated \$120,000 to our cause. That was part of the relationship piece. We have nine board members who are all passionate about what we do. The people who serve on our board all have some level of success and credibility in their profession and wanted to be connected relationally to the center and the kids, not just come to meetings and decide on policy.

DeVos: You had \$120,000, that's a pretty good start for a building campaign, and you got the kids involved too in fundraising and saving money for a building of their own. Why did it take 3 or 4 years to actually purchase a facility?

Chris: I was frustrated by that many times. We spent a couple of years looking and waiting for the right building. We went down many avenues but nothing panned out. It just seemed like the right property either wasn't available or we didn't have enough money to make the purchase. Through all of those years, though, we kept on sharing the vision with anyone who would listen.

DeVos: What was the turning point?

Chris: About a year and a half ago, the perfect building became available. I checked with the realtor who had the listing and found out it was owned by a company that buys up properties cheaply and tries to flip them for profit. They wanted 1.2 million dollars, which I knew we didn't have, but I brought an old fraternity friend who was in real

estate over to take a look at it. He was excited about the possibility and had knowledge of the company that owned the property. He promised to investigate the situation. When I didn't hear from him for over three weeks, I just forgot about it. I remember I had taken an afternoon off (trying to maintain balance like the Initiative taught me) when I got a phone call from the realtor. He said another group was interested in the property and if The Hope Center still had an interest they needed to make an offer that day. Right after that, my fraternity friend finally called me and said that he had found out the name of the company that fronted the money for the owners to purchase the property. By coincidence, the president of our board was an executive for that company. I called

amount of money we had. To make a long story short, the owner found out about the connection with our board president and they decided to accept our offer even though it was less than half of what they were asking for the property.

"Looking back now, I can see that so much depended on the relationships..."

Chris Jehle

In another amazing turn of events, a local business man who had been mentoring kids at The Hope Center for a year and a half offered to run a capital campaign for renovation of the building. The funny thing is that

originally he had called me out of the blue after I had spoken about what we were doing at a non-profit basketball tournament. He said he would like to become a mentor. Once he became committed on a regular basis we began to go out for lunch on occasion. I never asked him for money and honored his desire to invest in the kids. He was able to raise the money for renovations and more for operations funding to increase our staff.

DeVos: What lessons have you learned about resources and relationships at The Hope Center?

Chris: The reality of this building has demonstrated to the kids that dreams can come true and that hard work and diligence does pay off. For Tammi and me it demonstrated that God works through many different people and circumstances to bring his plans to fruition. When I think back to where we were three or four years ago, I realize we probably didn't even have the financial and structural capacity to run a ministry at this level. By placing a high value in people, and by being patient and waiting for God's timing, we've been able to accomplish the vision that the Lord had for The Hope Center.



Chris and Tammi Jehle

the board president and he called me back and told me to make an offer and he would see what he could do. I submitted an offer for the

Seeking Federal Funds?

Faith-based and community organizations (FBCO's) have a long tradition of helping Americans in need, and together represent an integral part of our nation's social service network. Yet, all too often, the Federal government has put in place complicated rules and regulations preventing these organizations from competing for funds on an equal footing with other organizations.

President Bush believes Federal funds should be awarded to the most effective organizations public or private, faith-based or secular and all must be allowed to compete on a level playing field. Therefore, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives was established to support and expand the role of FBCOs that provide social services.

Lisa Trevino Cummins, who formerly served as associate director for the Faith Based Initiative office, is encouraged by the ongoing push to fund faith-based efforts but cautions that the process shouldn't be approached

WHITE HOUSE FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

as a simplistic one.

"Gaining Federal funding can be difficult," said Cummins who recommends partnering with organizations that have expertise in acquiring Federal funds. "Even if it means working in collaboration with a secular agency I don't advise trying to do it all alone."

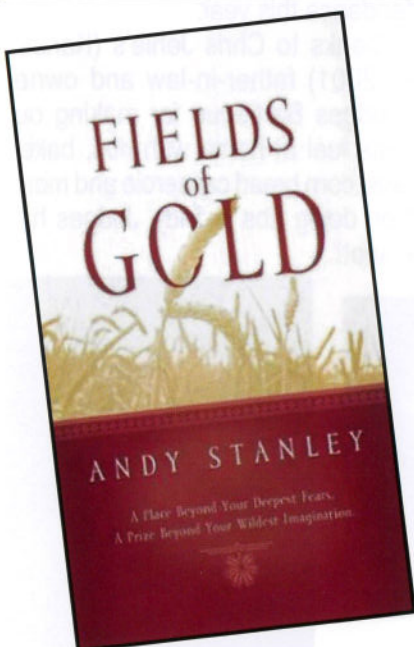
On a monthly basis there are seminars and conferences taking place around the nation that provide instruction about Federal grant writing. "Those are worth taking a stab at but can be overwhelming," said Cummins. "You could hire a grant writer but that can cost upwards of \$2000 to \$10,000."

"Find the right relationships and develop them," she said. "Be creative, but don't give up your mission."

In 2006, Cummins said to expect the administration to place emphases on existing programs being resourced in America. Much of the faith-based funds will continue to support programs that address:

- The ex-offender population
- Addictions recovery programs
- Community development
- Capacity building
- Mentoring both youth and ex-prisoners
- Family strengthening, marriage, and relationship building skills

The White House Office has published several written resources to assist grassroots groups in navigating the Federal grants system. These documents include a catalog of Federal grant opportunities, a guide to the legal responsibilities associated with the receipt of Federal funds, and a booklet which outlines the protection of religious hiring rights. Federal funding documents are available at: www.fbcigov



Fields of Gold

By Andy Stanley

For many Christians, financial giving is where our faith faces some of its greatest challenges. When we grow beyond the fear of giving to the place of cheerful giving—therein lays our fulfillment.

As stewards of God's resources, we have a choice. We can sow the seed or we can lock it away out of fear. Author Andy Stanley helps us to acknowledge the power and joy that can be experienced when trusting God with the resources He's entrusted to each of us –

"A place beyond your deepest fears, a prize beyond your wildest imagination..."

Any giver will find Fields of Gold an affirmation of what those who sow generously can expect to receive in this life—as well as the life to come—when God guides your giving.

This book, you'll find, is a rich read.

Laura Bush, George Williams Help America's Youth

A conversation with First Lady Laura Bush about improving relationships between children and their fathers offered a big boost for George Williams (Kansas City 2001), who leads the Urban Father-Child Partnership at the National Center for Fathering.

Williams invited Mrs. Bush to see one of his programs in Kansas City, Reconnecting Education and Dads (READ), and to participate in a roundtable discussion with leaders of the center about children and fathering issues.

Because Mrs. Bush has taken a new interest in community and faith-based programs that help at-risk youth, her talk with Williams and others was strategic.

This year the first lady launched a national initiative, Helping America's Youth, to address problems facing young people in the United States and to look at solutions that have proven successful in overcoming

those challenges.

In October, Williams attended Mrs. Bush' address to over 500 youth development specialists at the first White House Conference on Helping America's Youth. "Being a good dad doesn't always come naturally," she said. "Young men who become fathers need help in learning how to stay involved in their children's lives. The National Center for Fathering helps fathers develop emotional bonds with their children."

Having developed curriculums and programs to reconnect dads with their children, Williams is now receiving federal funds through a partnership for a prevention program that targets teen dads. He is also awaiting legislative approval to fund another fathering training effort in Washington D.C.

Helping America's Youth is an initiative that emphasizes the importance of family, school and community. Its programs provide a web-based guide to community



Laura Bush listens to George Williams

partnerships, up-to-date research on effective youth development programs and an online platform for effective strategic planning.

Said Mrs. Bush, "I'm honored that my husband asked me to lead this initiative. [It] has given me the opportunity to meet so many terrific young people, as well as the caring adults who have made it their life commitment to help the young people around them grow up."

For more information, visit www.helpingamericasyouth.gov

DVULI Alumni Do Ribs at CCDA

It was all 'sauce in the face' for alumni, current participants, instructors and friends who convened over ribs at the Christian Community Development Association Conference in Indianapolis last November.

DeVos Urban Leadership staffers Ron Carter, Ginny Vander Hart, Eileen

Kooreman, and Gerald Bell welcomed more than 50 people to Vecinos Coffee House downtown to meet up, catch up, and fill up. Literally!

The annual CCDA Conference is where many DVULI-mates expand their network, build capacity and spark new passion for ministry in the urban communities they serve. According to

conference officials, over 2000 were in attendance this year.

Thanks to Chris Jehle's (Kansas City 2001) father-in-law and owner of Judges Barbecue for making our guests feel at home with ribs, baked beans, corn bread casserole and more. When doing ribs in Indy, Judges hits the spot!





Calendar of Events

Workshop 1

February 9-11, 2006
Boston, Pittsburgh

February 16-18, 2006
Grand Rapids

February 23-25, 2006
Atlanta, Minneapolis

Workshop 5

March 9-11, 2006
Houston

March 16-18, 2006
Los Angeles, Portland

March 23-25, 2006
Indianapolis

March 30-April 1, 2006
Denver

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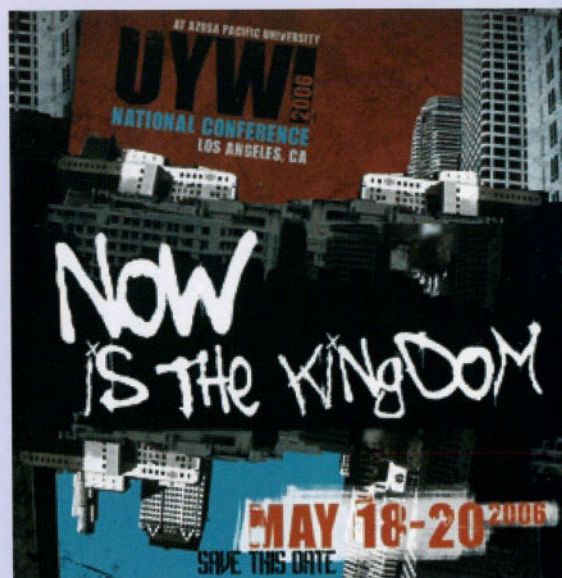
Phone: 616-643-4700
Fax: 616-774-0116

www.dvuli.org

2006 Reload Cities

(www.uywi.org)

Birmingham/Atlanta
Bay Area/Oakland
Portland
Houston
Orange County
Albuquerque
Chicago
Detroit
Philadelphia
Boston
Memphis
Minneapolis



Happy New Year from the Staff of DeVos Urban Leadership

May your 2006 be filled with overwhelming joy, lasting memories and wonderful reflections of our Savior and Lord!



Win a \$25.00 Travel coupon towards your transportation to DVULI Reunion 2007

Here's how: Guess which staff person in the photo above has a surprise behind the bow and what that surprise is...be specific!

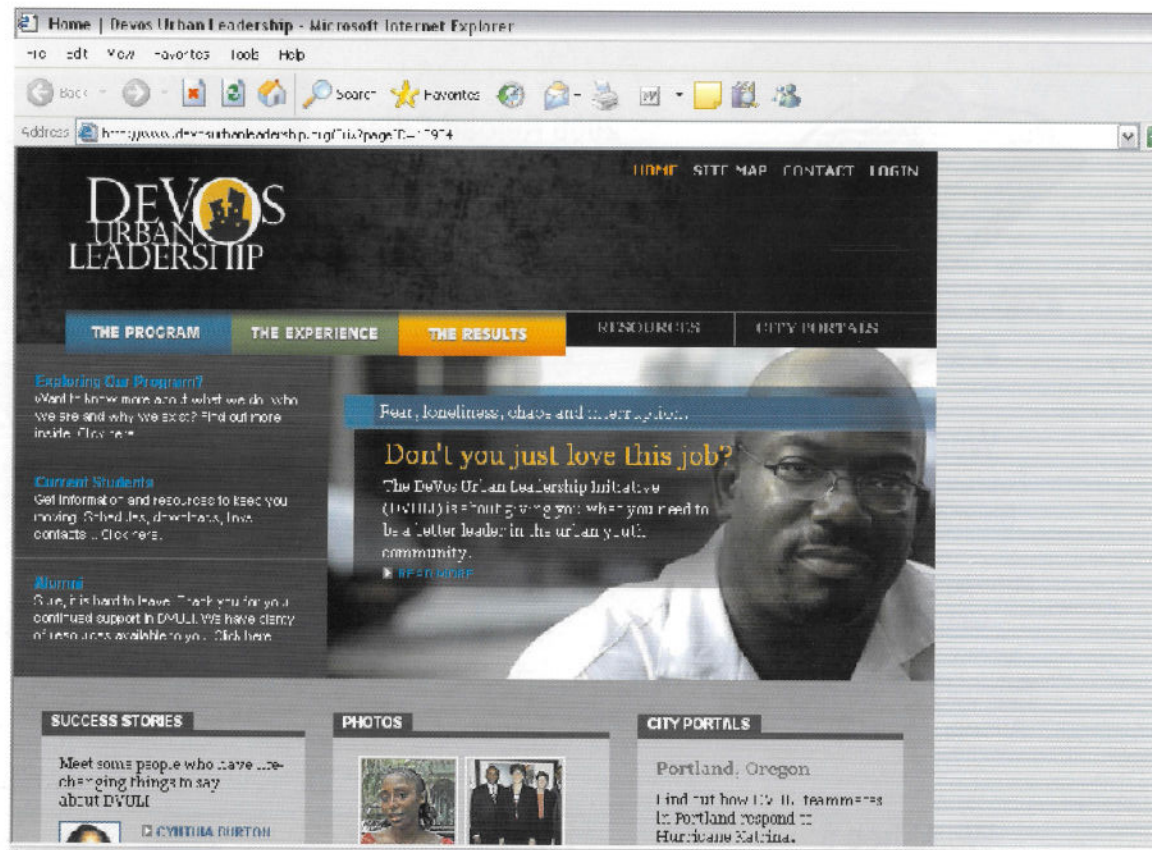
You may enter only once by email (at dvuli@rdvcorp.com) or in writing:

DVULI Guessing Game - P.O. Box 230257 - Grand Rapids, MI - 49523-0257

Entries must be received by January 31, 2006

All correct entries will be entered into a drawing. The winner of the Guessing Game and the winning answer will be announced in a 2006 issue of the newsletter and at www.devosurbanleadership.org. The winner will be notified on the day the surprise is revealed. Winner must attend Reunion 2007 to claim the \$25.00 travel coupon.

Things have changed around
at our online home. Visit
www.devosurbanleadership.org
and see what's new.



PO Box 230257
Grand Rapids, MI 49523-0257

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