

# advancement

Sharing news of the Lord's work through Advance Memphis

Summer '09

**FOR WISDOM IS PROTECTION JUST AS MONEY IS PROTECTION, BUT THE ADVANTAGE OF KNOWLEDGE IS THAT WISDOM PRESERVES THE LIVES OF ITS POSSESSORS.**

**ECCLESIASTES 7:12**



**OUR MISSION**  
is to serve adults in the Cleaborn/Foote community by helping residents acquire knowledge, resources, and skills to be economically self-sufficient through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dear Friends,

Knowledge has the power to expand—or limit—our opportunities like few other things. In this newsletter, we explore Advance Memphis's mission to provide knowledge to our students. Knowledge represents opportunity, and when opportunities for employment and education become available, self-sufficiency is not far behind.

In dreaming about how God might bring more opportunities for learning to the Cleaborn/Foote community, I've often dreamed about vocational training. Recognizing the role of Memphis as a national player in warehousing, distribution, and logistics, our staff began to envision how God might help us provide training to equip residents for success in this field. As we dreamed, God used friends of Advance to introduce us to the leaders at Mid-South Community College. They, too, had a vision for increasing training opportunities for individuals without HS Diplomas, and we began to discuss a collaboration that would bring together excellent teachers, students who were eager to learn, and warehouse space—right here in our community.

On June 1st, seven Advance Memphis graduates began the "Warehouse Warriors" class through MSCC. They began with 2 weeks of classroom time at the MSCC campus, and then began to apply their classroom experience to

6 weeks of hands-on work in DCI's warehouse space right here in the neighborhood. The certificate of completion and forklift certification that these students will receive will give them a distinct advantage over other applicants—they will have knowledge and skills specific to the industry, as well as the confidence that comes with knowing you're prepared for the job. Jerry Webb, MSCC Director of Business and Industry Services explained, "MSCC is excited about this partnership and the opportunity to help these students. Our goal is to teach occupational skills and empower students to change their lives by applying these skills."

We praise God for providing this partnership with MSCC that has already led to increased opportunities for knowledge and employment, through companies like Y&M Technologies. We continue to dream about more opportunities for our graduates...opportunities for knowledge, for employment, and for self-sufficiency, through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In Him,  
Steve Nash

## Mid-South Community College WAREHOUSE WARRIORS



*Euletha "Shay" Scott stands in front of the mill she is learning to use at MSCC.*

**HOPE**

**KNOWLEDGE**

**RESOURCES**

**SKILLS**

# KNOWLEDGE: Advance Memphis GED Program

45% of the residents of the Cleaborn/Foote community have a High School diploma. The national average is 80%. Without a diploma or GED, opportunities for higher education or employment are incredibly limited. Opportunities become even more limited during times of economic decline, as unemployment climbs and more highly qualified workers compete for entry-level positions.

For Advance Memphis, this means that imparting knowledge in the most traditional sense—book-learning—is a key part of our mission to equip residents for self-sufficiency. This summer, intern Tim Yagel is working to understand GED programs here in Memphis, and determine what sort of GED preparation will best serve students at Advance Memphis. Calling on his training at Covenant College's Community Development program, Tim seeks to build a program that is rooted in relationships. Through these relationships, Tim believes that students will learn, gain confidence, and develop a commitment to learning and knowledge that will last throughout their lives.

In 2006, the national pass rate for the GED was 68%, indicating the difficulty of the test. Tutoring is one of the most effective ways to help students prepare for success. To provide this tutoring in the most effective way, Advance Memphis is collaborating with Southwest Tennessee Community College Educational Opportunity Center, MidSouth Reads, Memphis Literacy Council, and the Messick Adult Center. By collaborating with these organizations, we seek to expand the pool of resources available to our students.



*Jobs for Life grad Shameka Harvey (far left) is being tutored by volunteers Troy Wiggins and Marla Williams.*

## **Tutors are the most vital part of the Advance Memphis GED Program.**

The 5 GED testing areas are: Writing, Social Studies, Science, Reading and Mathematics. If you're looking for an opportunity to help a student make a significant change in his or her life, please contact [tim@advancememphis.org](mailto:tim@advancememphis.org).

# Advance Memphis Celebrates 10 Years in the Neighborhood

In May of 1999, Steve Nash, his fearless wife Donna, and several supportive board members started out to create a non-profit that would serve the Lord and bring economic health back to the Cleaborn/Foote neighborhood. 10 years later, the Nashes continue to work alongside committed staff, volunteers, and community members.

Since 1999, Advance Memphis has gained several full-time staff members, purchased a new building, and been featured in books about community development. The programs have been developed and refined, and now hundreds of community members are served every year. We thank everyone who came to celebrate our anniversary. We praise God for blessing the ministry of Advance Memphis and look forward to many more years of relationships, bible studies, budgets and resumes!



*TOP: Steve Nash, Executive Director and Ann Brainerd, Program Coordinator*

*BOTTOM: Jobs for Life grads Nadia Toney and Shay Scott celebrated the anniversary with Juanita Johnson, Employment Specialist.*

*Jobs for Life grads Derek Franklin and Jamie Pryor attended the anniversary party.*



**HOPE**

*Mario Riley spoke about Advance's influence on his life.*



**KNOWLEDGE**



**RESOURCES**

**SKILLS**

# KNOWLEDGE: Jobs for Life and Financial Freedom

If the Gospel is at the heart of everything we do at Advance Memphis, knowledge is the lifeblood that sustains our programs. By offering programs that impart basic knowledge about personal finance and success in the workplace, we empower students to assess their lives and move toward self-sufficiency. After applying for and being approved for the program, students begin the 4 weeks of training that includes Jobs for Life (JfL), Financial Freedom, and basic computer literacy curriculum.

The practical knowledge students gain from class is significant. But as JfL instructor Andrew Vincent explains, "real success is never a result of mere knowledge. The strength of JfL is the Christ-centered relationships that students develop with staff, volunteers, and each other. Through relationships, students have the opportunity to see this practical curriculum fleshed out in other people's lives. This makes the knowledge gained through lectures and homework more meaningful, because students can taste the fruit of hard work in other people's lives. This is especially true when we share the good news about Jesus and how he wants to transform us to be 'workmen approved by God.' **It's one thing to hear the gospel preached, but when gospel is lived out, its message becomes all the more powerful.**"

Students' lives are changed dramatically by this combination of relationships, practical learning, and the Gospel. Below, a few students share more about their JfL experience.



Grads of the Jobs for Life program often cite this as the first graduation ceremony of their lives.

## JOBS FOR LIFE

- Understanding employer expectations
- Overcoming roadblocks to success
- Taking responsibility for one's actions
- Perseverance with a positive attitude
- Succeeding through adversity
- Integrity in the workplace
- Customer service
- Conflict resolution
- Excelling on the job
- Effective communication skills
- Building a resume and developing a vocational plan.

## FINANCIAL FREEDOM

- Tracking what you spend
- Creating a personal budget
- Saving
- Materialism and Values
- Predatory lending
- Credit repairs
- Stewardship
- Community resources: banks, credit unions, lending institutions.

## HOW JOBS FOR LIFE AFFECTED ME...



*The class was like therapy sessions to help me identify where my mistakes were in the past and [learn] how to avoid making future ones...I don't smoke weed anymore. I have more control over my patience level and my anger. Most of all, I'm clear on God's plan for me.*

**--Roderick Holmes**



*The class showed me a legal way to make it, that I don't have to sell drugs. I spend time at Advance now because it's a safe place...I don't have to prove myself.*

**--Tyree Blackman**



*I had lost my way and gave up on life and my closeness to God. [Advance] helped me to become more focused and get back in touch with Jesus so I may know my direction and to not give up regardless of what I may face in life.*

**--Anita Brown**

HOPE

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# Advance Memphis Progress Report

The Advance Memphis staff is committed to practicing responsible stewardship through outcome based management. Each year, we set specific goals. Each goal is tied to a program, and each program is tied to our mission statement.

While numbers don't measure everything, progress toward annual goals is tracked on our website at [www.advancememphis.org](http://www.advancememphis.org). There is a link on the home page to the Progress Report. We also track progress each quarter in this newsletter.

ADVANCE MEMPHIS PROGRAM	YTD GOAL	YTD ACTUAL
Number of JFL/FF Grads	64	56*
Number of New Employers	10	17
Number of Grads Employed	40	36
Number of IDAs Opened	18	10**
Number of Volunteer Hours	425	700

\* One JFL/FF class was dropped from the 08-09 schedule  
\*\* Until further notice, the program can only support 20 total participants at any time.



## **ADVANCE MEMPHIS OUTSOURCING PROGRAM IMPRESSES:**

"The WM Barr managers have reported that the partnership between us and Advance has resulted in quality work that is leading to reduced costs for our business." **Rich Loomis, CEO, WMBarr**



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