

CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services

Making Connections

To Youth and Families in Our Community

5 Municipal Plaza ~ Suite 3 • Clifton Park, NY 12065 • (518) 371-1185 • www.captainyfs.org

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Dear Friends,

When times are hard, generosity becomes more difficult, yet it is the very time when it is needed most. CAPTAIN has always been fortunate to benefit from the generosity of people in this community during good times as well as difficult times.

CAPTAIN programs endure thanks to the many volunteers and contributors who commit countless hours and resources toward our mission. CAPTAIN's Treasures is successful due to the corps of volunteers who operates the store; our Teen Talk and Phone Friend Help Lines serve kids after school thanks to the teen and adult volunteers who run the program; youth have a special place to go for homework help and activities at Cheryl's Lodge because of the volunteers who make it special; and our Homeless and Runaway Youth Shelter is able to provide care for the most vulnerable of youth thanks to donations from individuals and businesses throughout our community.

When CAPTAIN recently asked the community for help with holiday giving programs we received a tremendous outpouring of food for our pantry, gift cards, individuals and businesses signed up for our Adopt a Family Holiday Program, and purchased hundreds of new toys for our annual Toy Shop.

We at CAPTAIN know that for many families this will be a year of sacrifice and hardship, and that even those more fortunate will feel the strain of a battered economy. We also know, firsthand, the extraordinary level of generosity people in this community demonstrate when times are hard. We hope you will continue to give a portion of yourself through CAPTAIN and the many ways it touches our community.

With sincerest gratitude,
Michael Daugherty, Executive Director

"The only gift is a portion of thyself."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Above Left: Students from Shatekon Elementary School worked hard to organize and donate food items for the CAPTAIN Food Pantry. Above Right: Devon Poniatowski enjoys food and fun at the Teen Talk Gathering in February.

Thanks to the Towns!

On behalf of all of the local families who benefit from our services, CAPTAIN would like to publically recognize the Towns of Clifton Park, Halfmoon and Malta for their annual contributions. Only through the help of the generous funding from our Towns, is CAPTAIN able to provide its many services throughout southern Saratoga County.

With economic challenges facing every home, CAPTAIN has already experienced increases in need of between 20% and 100% in our programs and the support from our Townships is vital to our ability to respond to these levels of need and to be able to sustain our quality of service. From the people we serve, from the people who know of our good deeds, from our more than 300 active volunteers and the staff here at CAPTAIN thank you Clifton Park, thank you Halfmoon and thank you Malta.

“An Unbridled Affair” Dinner and Auction to benefit CAPTAIN

On July 23rd, CAPTAIN will hold its annual fundraising event at the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame in Saratoga Springs. Thoroughbred racing is a sport of speed and high drama dominated by equine athletes whose grace and beauty have become legendary and the CAPTAIN Board of Directors is honored and thrilled that D. Wayne Lukas will partner with Mrs. Kate Veitch as Honorary Co-Chairs for the event.

Mr. Lukas has trained four Kentucky Derby winners and had more Breeders' Cup winners than any other trainer. His induction into the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame makes it a great setting for the event. Mr. Lukas will also host a live auction, which will highlight the evening's entertainment. Soul Session, a high energy and spirited ensemble, will provide entertainment for the evening. The group is led by “soulist” Garland Nelson, former lead vocalist of the New York Players. We are also fortunate to have the evening catered by Classé Catering an innovative special events firm specializing in one of a kind culinary experiences. Classé receives rave reviews from clients and promises to offer a customized menu for CAPTAIN's guests.

Event Volunteers Needed

CAPTAIN is in need of volunteers to work in a variety of capacities before or on the day of the CAPTAIN

fundraiser, July 23rd. Interested individuals should email Brandi at Brandi@CAPTAINYFS.org or call 371-1185.

Corporate and Business Sponsors

Once again, CAPTAIN is looking to the local corporate and business community as well as individuals interested in partnering with and supporting CAPTAIN with a variety of upcoming programs and events. Businesses interested in sponsorship information should contact Rebecca Varno at 371-1185 or email her at Rebecca@CAPTAINYFS.org.

“An Unbridled Affair” – Dinner and Auction – July 23rd
2009 Junior After Prom – May 16th
CAPTAIN Bike Works (see article on page 4)

CAPTAIN Receives Generous Grant

On February 18, CAPTAIN was presented with a \$5,000 grant from **The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region's Assemblyman Robert Reilly Salary Fund**. This grant will be used to help expand and organize the Volunteer Program at CAPTAIN. We are fortunate enough to have a group of caring community members who volunteer their time each year for our programs. However, each year over 50 student volunteers graduate and some of our adult volunteers move on. CAPTAIN is grateful to The Community Foundation and Assemblyman Robert Reilly for this grant as it will go toward helping CAPTAIN identify, recruit and develop our volunteer base.

Donations Update

In recognition of their 20th Anniversary, **Hannaford in Clifton Park** included CAPTAIN in their celebration by donating \$1,000 to our programs and services. CAPTAIN Executive Director Michael Daugherty had the opportunity to join Hannaford Manager Kevin Loveland during the check presentation ceremony. A regular supporter of CAPTAIN programs, Hannaford often supports us with donations of food for our Holiday Programs as well as gifts of cash.

Saratoga Gaming and Raceway presented CAPTAIN with a generous donation of \$5000. As part of their “Make a Difference” charity program, this donation will be used for our many programs and services, helping local people in need.

CAPTAIN Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter to celebrate 10th Anniversary this summer! Details to follow.



Program Notes

A Salute to our “Outreach in the Park” Homework Help Volunteers

The Homework Help Volunteers are very dedicated to the children that they serve. These volunteers work one-on-one, with students, assisting them in the completion of homework assignments at Cheryl’s Lodge, CAPTAIN’s Outreach Center. Volunteers provide tutoring and computer support each week during the school year for nearly 100 students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

In addition to working on homework assignments, they serve as Mentors in a formal Mentoring Program for Homework Help students. They provide holiday craft projects, donate clothing and school supplies, bring in personal resources and provide sewing skills to help on special projects.

Our volunteers are not looking for personal recognition or gain. Their commitment is to helping students reach their full potential and at the same time build their self esteem. Since 1991, when the Homework Help Program began, over 500 students have attended and been assisted by the volunteer staff. Cheryl’s Lodge currently has 30 active volunteers. If you think you may be interested in joining their ranks, call Kathie at 373-8873.

Family Assistance Program in Demand

In light of the current economic crisis, it is not surprising that the Family Assistance Program at CAPTAIN is being called upon on a daily basis to assist families in the Southern Saratoga region.

Several large house fires, and the ice storm earlier this winter caused hardships for many families including loss of earnings, possessions and food. These events sent already financially vulnerable families into further debt.

Thankfully, due to the generosity of our community during the holiday season, CAPTAIN was able to provide these families with gift cards to local grocery stores in order to supplement the food that was available in our own pantr, clothes from CAPTAIN’s Treasures and household items from the store as well.

Street Outreach in Saratoga County

In October of 2004, CAPTAIN received a grant for \$100,000 from the US Department of Health and Human Services to start a Street Outreach Program to provide a range of education, intervention, and prevention services to youth who were at risk of being subjected to sexual abuse or exploitation. Unfortunately, in the fall of 2007, CAPTAIN learned that it had lost it’s funding to

continue the Street Outreach Program.

As CAPTAIN is not an organization that gives up easily, we reapplied for funding again in 2008 and were awarded a grant of \$266,550 to be used over a three year period to help young people leave the streets.

Today, in communities across the country, there are young people living on the streets, running from or being asked to leave homes characterized by abuse, neglect, or parental drug or alcohol abuse. Once on the streets, such youth are at risk of being sexually exploited or abused by adults for pleasure or profit. Street youth may be drawn into shoplifting, survival sex or dealing drugs in order to earn money for food, shelter, clothing and other daily expenses. They often drop out of school and try to survive with little or no contact with medical professionals.

To prevent the sexual abuse or exploitation of these young people, and to provide them with services that help them leave the streets, Congress established the Education and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of Runaway, Homeless, and Street Youth Program, to fund street-based outreach and education for runaway and homeless youth

and youth on the streets who have been, or are at risk of being, sexually abused and/or exploited.

We are encouraged by this new funding and about restarting this valuable service for youth in Saratoga County who may find themselves in this type of situation.

Educators, law enforcement, and other interested individuals should call 371-1185 and ask to speak with Don Powers for further information.

Holiday Giving A Huge Success!

Each year, CAPTAIN serves this community during the holiday, providing plentiful Thanksgiving baskets and assisting families with holiday gifts. We were concerned that this year there would be more families in need and not as many individuals or businesses in the community that would be able to participate in our programs, so you can imagine our excitement when so many of you answered the call and donated during the holidays!

This year, the Adopt-A-Family program was able to help 94 families and 224 children. Santa’s Toy Shop provided gifts to 121 children and 46 families. We would like to thank everyone who helped make our program a success. Your generosity and thoughtfulness was greatly appreciated by those who were in need of CAPTAIN’s holiday assistance this year.

Get involved!
All Shenendehowa Students,
9th - 12th grade are welcome
to join our Teen Activity Board
student meetings. Please call
Andi for exact dates & times:
371-1185 x 313

Teen Talk Helpline Update

Teen Talk, the confidential helpline staffed by Teens, for Teens, celebrated the turn of the year with a tie dye blow out bash complete with Moe's Catering, a student favorite. Teen Talk volunteers are selected high school students who receive special training in an August retreat honing their listening skills, and developing an understanding of the resources available to help others in our local community. Monthly continuing education seminars offer timely opportunities for discussion as Teen Talkers assist their peers in navigating the challenges of daily life. A second-year volunteer, Casey Whitford, had such a powerful experience answering the helpline that she chose to highlight it in her college essay. "Hearing about the lives of other kids my age has been an eye-opening experience for me," she reports, "my perspective is so much broader now."

Bike Works Program

Courtesy of Clifton Park Elks and CAPTAIN!

In partnership with Clifton Park Elks Lodge 2466, CAPTAIN has received a Elks National Foundation Impact Grant to develop a youth bike program in the Clifton Park/Halfmoon Community. The vision for Bike Works is to help low-income youth in Southern Saratoga County acquire bicycles. Through this joint venture, new and used bikes will be distributed

to 8-18 year old youths for recreation and transportation.

With a focus on education and developing a sustained commitment to biking, Elks members and CAPTAIN community volunteers will teach bike safety, maintenance and repair to area youth throughout the spring and summer months. We are proud to embark on a program that encourages healthy activity, safety, and environmentally friendly transportation, while assisting young people with transportation for summer jobs.

CAPTAIN is currently seeking donations of new bikes or pre-owned bikes in excellent condition. As spring rolls around, please consider donating outgrown children's bikes to the Bike Works program. Call CAPTAIN at 371-1185 for details on how & when to donate.



Free Tax Preparation!

For families and individuals with an earned income below \$41,000

Tax Preparation Guarantees:

- No cost and no hidden fees
- IRS Certified preparers
- Multiple tax sites with convenient hours

CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services is one available tax preparation site Please call (518) 664-8322 to make an appointment today

A Thank You Note To Our Family Assistance Program:

Dearest Robin:

Please know how grateful I am for your understanding and help this Christmas. It was a wonderful help to have my children adopted.

God has blessed me with many gifts, so I am now feeling that I have no right to ask for more help, as son many people are having a very tough time. Yes thanks for the gifts of you, our Christmas was beautiful, with less stress and financial hardships.

Your Friend,
Anonymous

Support Your CAPTAIN!

Support Your CAPTAIN!

CAPTAIN ANNOUNCES ANNUAL CANISTER DRIVE!

For two weeks during the month of May, CAPTAIN will be holding their Annual Canister Drive. Throughout Clifton Park, local businesses will have our canisters available for your donations.

Big or small, every dime, quarter and dollar that is donated to CAPTAIN makes a difference, and helps us aid those in our community in need of help.

Please be on the lookout for canisters in your local favorite shopping spots, and be aware that teens from our Teen Activity Board may also knock on your door asking for donations. Your support, as always is appreciated.

Student Volunteer Benefits From Her Internship at Our Youth Shelter

In late 2008, CAPTAIN was approached by a Skidmore College Student who was interested volunteering at our Youth Home. As she completed her volunteer program, she left us a copy of her final paper. Here is an excerpt:

“Through my experience at the Youth Home I was able to expand and cultivate my perception of significant social issues, specifically poverty and child maltreatment. Although not every individual I interacted with at the Youth Home experienced abuse and neglect, I began to notice that oftentimes, those who had, displayed symptoms of insecurity, aggression and high-risk behaviors. Many of these youth were drug users, cutters, came from a background of poverty, and were involved in sexual relationships at a very young age. “

At first I was a bit wary of the fact that CAPTAIN was only a temporary relief and respite for kids. But, after a few days of volunteering, I realized that a lot can happen for a young person in only a few days.

On one occasion, a girl about

fifteen came up to me and said, “So you’re rich, huh?” I felt defensive because at home in Massachusetts, although I lived in a wealthy suburb, I always felt on the lower end of the spectrum. In high school, my father was laid off a few times and my family had a lot of money problems, and I had received a great deal of financial aid from my college in order to attend. For all these reasons, my knee jerk reaction was to explain that I was not rich, that I worked a lot, and that the only reason I could afford to go to college was my great financial aid package. She candidly and calmly replied, “you can afford to go to college?” You’re rich.”

Immediately I felt ashamed and foolish, for I was being extremely self-centered and hadn’t given any thought to the concept of relative poverty. In relation to the other students at my college and to the community in my hometown, I was not rich. However, in relation to this young woman and many of the other residents at the CAPTAIN Youth Home, of course I was rich. Another night, I learned to what degree poverty the young woman actually

faced on a day-to-day basis. She explained to me that, not only does she not have a dishwasher, but she doesn’t have a kitchen sink. She washes all the dishes at the bathroom sink and “even then the water is drizzly and brown.” The realization that this kind of poverty goes on in our community, not just an inner city, was also an important wake up call for me, in understanding my own perception of college and some of the communities in Saratoga County.

Although I started volunteering at CAPTAIN Youth Home for my Social Work class it turned out to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my freshman year. Moreover, when I chose the service learning option of the class, CAPTAIN became my favorite aspect of my whole class, so much so that I decided to continue to volunteer there even after my class was completed. Volunteering at CAPTAIN was a wake-up call for me, and a great learning experience.

A Note to CAPTAIN, Holidays 2008:

Dear Sir or Madam:

I’m normally a working and productive member of your community but I have been stationed in Iraq now for five months and I won’t be home for the Holidays. I’m looking forward to getting home around November of 2009 but until then, I can only call or email my family.

The reason I’m writing this letter is I was wondering if you offer a “Toys for Tots” or “Adopt A Family” program for the Holidays. I have a beautiful 3 ½ year old daughter, Isabella, and she and her mom are going through some tough times without me. I should be there to provide more than they have. Fortunately, I am well taken care of here, but they are struggling. Is there any possibility (if it’s not too late) that Isabella and June could be added to any Holiday giving list you may have? Possibly could they be also placed on a holiday food package? Isabella’s mom is set in her ways, meaning she believes pantry’s are for people in dire need. She’s gone to WIC and food stamps but she makes \$50-\$100 too much. I know that she probably hasn’t been to your pantry since I was there last. She has a great supportive family but times are tough for everyone right now. I thank you for your time and consideration. May god bless you.

Post Script: CAPTAIN adopted this family and provided gifts and food for the Holiday for Isabella and her mom June.

Community Supporters Nov 1, 2008-February 1, 2009

A Special Thank you to the businesses, faith-based groups and community organizations for their support of our programs. In addition, hundreds of individuals throughout our community made donations of time, money or goods since our last newsletter. CAPTAIN would not be possible without support from our community and in today's troubled times, our programs are needed now more than ever.

Our Appreciation Goes To:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| American Legion | Girl Scout Troop 2130 | Prince of Peace Lutheran Church |
| American Legion Auxiliary Mohawk Unit | Girl Scout Troop 2262 | Provide of St. Edward's Church |
| Arongen Elementary School | Girl Scout Troop 2534 | Round Lake Methodist Church |
| Atlantic Testing Labs | Gowana PTA | Rubel Family Foundation |
| Bath and Body Works | Halfmoon Dental | Saratoga Associates |
| Bella Moda Hair Salon | Hannaford, Clifton Park | Saratoga Gaming and Raceway |
| Borders, Clifton Park | Helping Hands/Our Lady of Grace Church | Schuyler Ridge Daycare |
| Braverman-Panza Medical Group | Independence Medical | Seton Health |
| Card Club Group | Iroquois Health Care | Shatekon Elementary School |
| Christ Community Reformed Church | Jonesville United Methodist Church | Shenendehowa High School West |
| Clifton Park Center Baptist Church | Jonesville Fire Dept. Ladies Aux. | Shenendehowa Methodist Church |
| Clifton Park Chabad | Karigon Elementary School | Shenendehowa Swim Team |
| Clifton Park Study Group | Knights of Columbus | Shenendehowa United Methodist Church |
| Clifton Park Town Court | Law Offices of Mary Audi Bjork | Shenendehowa United Methodist Church |
| Clifton Park/Halfmoon Library | Mechanicville United Methodist Church | Women |
| Coburg Village Residents Assoc. | Mother Theresa Academy | Skano Elementary School |
| Cotton Market | Neil & Jane Golub Foundation, Inc. | Southern Saratoga Women's Club |
| Creative Dance Arts | North Country Academy | St. Edward's Church |
| Curves, Rome Plaza | Northstar Church | St. George's Episcopal Church |
| Daisy Troop 1892 | Okte Elementary School | Strategic Solutions |
| Dorothy Welch Coral Society | Orenda Elementary School | Talbots |
| Empire State Chassis | Parkside Covenant Church | The Ya Ya's |
| Estate of Gerd Guendel | Phoenix Solutions | Town of Clifton Park |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church | Presbyterian Church Deacon's Fund | United Way of the Greater Capital Region |
| Fit For Life | Price Chopper, Clifton Park | Weight Watchers, Clifton Park |

CAPTAIN Youth and Family Services



Please accept my donation of \$ _____

I would like to make a pledge of \$ _____ (\$ _____ per month for _____ months)

Cardholder Name: _____ Account Number: _____

Exp.Date: _____ Signature: _____ Billing Address Zip: _____

I would like to make my donation in memory of _____ in honor of _____

Please forward acknowledgement to: _____ Address: _____

Would you like information on how to remember CAPTAIN in your will? _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Check enclosed _____ OR
Please charge my Mastercard _____ Visa _____

Please charge my Mastercard _____ Visa _____

SAVE THE DATES!

CAPTAIN will offer the Red Cross Babysitting course on Saturday May 23, from 9am-3pm. Registration begins March 16, and the course cost is \$25.00 per participant. Please call Brad Armstrong at 371-1185 if you are interested.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 25! Shenendehowa School Superintendent Oliver Robinson will be at the Outreach Center from 9:30-11 for the Cheryl's Lodge annual open house. Stop in for a cup of coffee, meet Outreach Staff and tour the facility. There will be door prizes. Questions: call 373-8873.

CAPTAIN is pleased to announce our 15th Annual Peace Camp. This free day camp will be held from July 20 – August 6, Monday-Thursday, from 8:30 – 2:00pm at CAPTAIN's Outreach Center in Halfmoon.. Open to Shenendehowa students in grades 1 – 6, Peace Camp uses music, drama, dance, non-competitive activities and games to improve conflict resolution skills and problem solving strategies in friendships and family relationships. For more information or an application, call Kathie at 373-8873.

Staff Matters



Don Powers--Street Outreach Coordinator: Originally from Long Island, Don graduated from Rocky Point Jr.-Sr. High School after which he attended and graduated from, Purchase College in 2004. Don comes from a nearly three year stint as the Teen Program Coordinator at the Ballston Area Community Center. He plans to bring the Street Outreach Program back into prominence in Saratoga County by providing at risk and other youth the means to leave behind the influence of the streets and embrace safe alternatives.

Andi Tuttle--Youth Development Coordinator: Andi, the Clifton Park native and proud Shenenedehowa graduate, has returned to the Capital District with Student Leadership in mind. She called Villanova University home for 5 years, staying on to complete a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and work for the Student Life department. Since then, her professional experiences have led her to facilitate health improvement programs, youth development curricula, leadership training modules, and hone her skills as a life coach. Advocating positivity for those around her, Andi will surely put her smile and enjoyment of life to good use as CAPTAIN's Youth Development Coordinator.



CAPTAIN Board of Directors 2009

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Funding Sources

The Town of Clifton Park
The Town of Halfmoon
The Town of Malta
Saratoga County Youth Bureau
NYS Office of Children & Family Services
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance
NYS Department of Education

US Department of Education
US Department of Health & Human Services
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Shenendehowa Central School District
Washington, Saratoga, Warren,
Hamilton, Essex BOCES



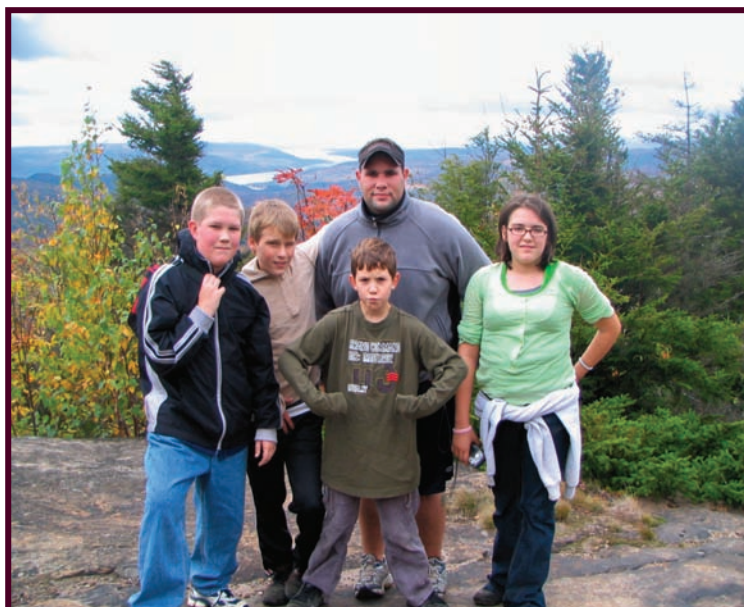
Above: Brad Armstrong, and M & H Installations president, Scott Hunter, dropping the first puck at the Shen Hockey game. Above right: Teen Activity Board member Emily DeFeciani paints faces during WinterFest. Right: Students from Karigon collected food during the holidays for CAPTAIN.

Reaching the Summit

For some young people CAPTAIN encounters, success means achieving a good grade in school or making their parents proud by doing their chores. For others, success can be accomplished by achieving something that at one point seemed impossible. Still others never test their limits or simply don't have the opportunity to realize their full potential.

Recently, Brad Armstrong invited some young people from Cheryl's Lodge to explore the wilderness by going on a hike. At first the young people were excited and thought the hike would be fun, however, the fun ended quickly once the youth began feeling the physical effects of the hike. In fact, within the first 10 minutes the youth began to get a little tired and were ready to give up. These are typical reactions to difficult situations that at-risk youth find themselves in. They think it is just easier to quit. As the hike continued, step by step the fatigue increased and the idea of reaching the summit seemed impossible. However, the youth pulled together with Brad's help--truly demonstrating teamwork

at its finest--and uplifted each other with positive conversations, which brought the group together. Even though the climb was difficult--the youth had the will to succeed. As the summit was reached, the reactions on the faces of these youth were priceless and memorable. The young people that once were so ready to give up and go home immediately were smiling and radiated confidence. They all agreed that this was one of the best experiences they had ever embarked on.



What the youth did not realize was they took with them more than just that successful climb. On the ride home the youth started talking about how they handled this obstacle and how that lesson could be applied to other challenges. They talked about how their experience on the hike could translate into everything they do in life. Goal setting, stress management, teamwork, healthy relationships, communication skills, trust, confidence and the will to persevere were all lessons taken from the hike--and which could be applied to school, home and social situations. With your help, young people in our community are given the chance to experience new and different situations such as going on a nature hike. Cheryl's Lodge is just one of the CAPTAIN programs that benefits from your support, and that touches the lives of teens and youth in our very community on a daily basis.