



Noticias

"Because Community Makes All the Difference We Will Work To Serve and Strengthen Ours"

Learning How To Fish

A Note from the Executive Director ~ D. Todd Clough



As some of you might know, since I was young I have spent a huge percentage of my free time chasing fish and trying to convince them to eat the little fur ball at the end of my line.

Like many kids, my fishing career started with a cane pole and a worm dangling from a hook that my older brother Mike had precisely placed. As I grew older my fishing skills evolved, and I was not only able to put the worm on the hook, I also assisted him in digging up the juicy little morsels from our mother's garden.

When I was about ten Mike found a bamboo fly rod, and our fishing lives changed forever. Since he was now a fly fisherman I was bound and determined to follow this path as well. I tagged along on his fishing adventures every chance I got.

Like the early days of worm fishing my success in catching fish with a fly rod was tied directly into how generous or not Mike was with giving me advice, distributing the right fly, and showing me where the fish lie.

As time went on I became a better angler largely because of his loving tutelage. Then he went off to war in Vietnam. With his absence I was at a loss in many ways, especially in trout streams.

At first I was baffled by where to fish and what flies to use, but in Mike's absence I realized that I actually knew a lot more than I thought I did and that Mike had built a solid foundation of skills for me to build upon.

From that realization I became a good (independent) angler. By the time he safely came home from the war I was able to hold my own next to him in the moving waters.

A Chinese proverb says "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime". Not too long ago I was asked by someone about the Parish, "Do you give people fish or do you teach them how to fish?" My answer was "Both".

In serving the community at the Denver Inner City Parish, it has struck me over the years that what we do is not unlike my experience of learning how to fish. At first I had no clue how to do it, but because of a loving and caring brother, I was taught enough to become a capable and independent angler/person.

For some of the homeless men and women we work with our relationship begins by giving them bread and a blanket because they are hungry and cold. As time goes on, and because of the relationships we build, we are able help them help themselves and transform their lives from one of despair to one of hope. It's a lot like learning how to fish.

A Collaborative Kick-Off

September marks the start of Food Exchange Resource Network (FERN), the Parish's collaborative food bank program based out of our new distribution center in Southwest Denver. The Parish will be working with His Hands Christian Ministries, Community Ministry, and Crossroads of the Rockies in running the 15,000 square foot center. FERN will work consistently to provide quality nutritional food like fresh produce, meat, eggs and dairy to all individuals and families. These items are uncommon for many food banks here in Denver. FERN has also aimed to increase the number of food bank visits per month for all program participants. We are currently looking to increase our food donations, contact Adrian Castro, Food Bank Director, at 303.629.0636 for more information.

Please join us at the FERN Warehouse on Tuesday, September 27th beginning at 6:30pm as we celebrate together. There will be food, drinks and community related events until 8:30pm.

2820-B S. Zuni Street, Englewood, CO 80110

Young Excellence

Interview with Paul Martinez*, 8th Grader at La Academia



Paul Martinez grew up across the street from La Academia, but his path to the school has been anything but direct. His family life has always been a bit chaotic. Paul is almost 13 years old; he's the second oldest of six children. Mom and Dad are separated. Dad is in and out of family life - depending on whether he's in or out of jail. Mom has struggled with drugs, though she's currently clean. Because of Paul's chaotic life, he has taken a rather circuitous route to being a star 8th grader at La Academia.

When Paul was little, his older sister decided she didn't want to attend West High School. Instead, she walked across the street one day to find out about the school at "the Parish." She heard about the school because her grandmother came to worship at the Parish. Classes were smaller, there was more one-on-one interaction with teachers, and it felt safe. Paul thought he might like to go to

La Academia too when he was old enough. That plan changed when times got rough. Paul's family was separated from each other when Mom had a relapse and Dad was in jail. Some of the siblings went to stay with extended family while others were placed in foster care. Paul and his older sister initially lived with their grandmother but ended up living in Wheat Ridge with an older cousin who had several children of her own. It was difficult to get from Wheat Ridge to West Denver, so Paul ended up in Jefferson County Schools in the same classes as his cousins. When public school didn't work out, the family went back to what works - La Academia.

Paul started 7th grade at La Academia in 2010. He had a great first year and made the honor roll. Like his sister, Paul feels safe at La Academia. Paul says that at public school, "the teachers teach but they don't talk to the students, not about goals and life." Aside from the long drive, Paul was doing well, but life changed again when Mom got sober. Paul and his siblings moved back in with Mom; they lived in the public housing projects in southwest Denver. They recently found a house of their own a few blocks away from the projects. Paul and his sister, a senior in the high school, get up early to get to school. They take one bus, one light rail ride, and a mile walk just to get to the school that used to be right outside their living room window.

Paul began this year at the top of his 8th grade class. He is taking high school math - a short journey right up the stairs to the high school - and is excited to try out for the baseball team next year. In coming newsletters, we will follow Paul's journey as he finishes up middle school and gets ready for high school at La Academia.

**The names herein have been changed to protect the privacy of the student and the family.*

The Last Year

Interview with Pete Zamora, 12th Grader at La Academia

Pete Zamora came to La Academia from a private parochial High School. Pete's family is strongly Catholic, so he's attended private Catholic school his whole life. During his freshman year at his previous school, Pete got a lot of D's. In his words, "If I got a D, I was good. That was my mindset." Unfortunately, there was not a lot of intervention. According to Pete, "The teachers didn't seem like they were going to try to help me out, so I blew them off. I sank to the bottom of the class, and I was left there. I went to school to talk to friends." Pete ended up failing two courses his freshman year. Pete was given two choices: make up the classes in summer school at a cost of \$800 or go to another school.

Having never been outside the parochial system, Pete was a little wary of other schools. Fortunately for Pete, he had frequent meetings with former DICP board member Patrick Byrne who runs the Byrne Urban Scholars Program. Patrick had mentioned La Academia to Pete while he was struggling, and Patrick brought him to the school one day for a visit. After giving it a lot of thought and considering economic realities, Pete thankfully chose La Academia. Pete wasn't quite sure what to expect at a non-Catholic school. One of the first things Pete noticed is that La Academia does not allow students to pass any course with D's. Pete's first La Academia lesson was that he had to work harder. Another thing he noticed was the informality between the students and staff - everyone, including staff, is on a first-name basis. Pete's final lesson came at student meeting. The entire school meets every day for 15 minutes to talk about upcoming events, praise accomplishments, and rectify mistakes. Pete was surprised that every student in the school could fit comfortably in our relatively small cafeteria and that we speak so honestly with each other. The small size, the informality, and the academic rigor reminded Pete of a family, a stern family, but a family nonetheless.

Pete has managed to successfully make up his two missing courses at La Academia. Our goal is to go the extra mile to help students like Pete find success. La Academia is currently helping Pete receive private tutoring to raise his ACT scores. Pete is entering his senior year and is very excited about the opportunities afforded him at La Academia. When asked about the differences between La Academia and his previous school, Pete said that if he had stayed at his former school, "I wouldn't be going to a good college. There I'd feel lucky to get into a local community college. At La Academia I have a shot at CU, CSU, and Oklahoma. The local community colleges are now my backup." In coming newsletters, we will follow Pete's progress as he graduates from high school and gets ready for college.



Re-Entering Life... on the Outside

Interview with Donn Dintaman

About a month ago I sat down with Donn Dintaman, one of our Sober Living house managers. Donn and I spoke in detail about his story and how he ended up finding the Project ReNew Program at the Denver Inner City Parish.

What is sober living?

Sober Living through Project ReNew is a program to support people re-entering society from prison and treatment programs. According to Donn, other re-entry programs did not put enough emphasis on sobriety. Donn described Project ReNew as unlike other assistance programs that place you, "right back in the middle of the worst situation you ever had to deal with. All you had to do was leave the premises turn the corner and find the dealers," DICP's Sober Living houses are in good neighborhoods where it's safe to walk the streets at night. Donn describes it as an "environment where you know you come home and it's safe." DICP currently operates two Sober Living homes for men and their expectations are high. The men are to remain sober, work to find employment, become self-sufficient, respect the house, their housemates and commit to turning their lives around. Donn told us that Sober Living offers, "a chance to turn around your life and go in the forward direction."



Donn has shown that you can leave the correctional system and be successful. Through referrals and research Donn has been able to find multiple programs that fit with the goals he has set for himself. When first released from Jefferson County's Correctional Facility he found the Gateway Program at Red Rocks Community College, one of the only colleges in Denver that offers services for ex-offenders.

Where to go next?

Donn: In the short-term: keep myself fed, a roof over my head and schooling and then go from there. I'm a college student at College America and I'm pursuing my business accounting degree.

Donn is also working with the Rocky Mountain MicroFinance Institute to build a business plan and potentially receive a \$4,000-\$6,000 loan to open his own limousine charter service again. He wanted to leave us with these words:

"Thank God that there's help out there for people that want to change their lives. With the right guidance and help from people, you can make a change in your life, I have. I back the program 100% and if I can help people change their life around, that's a change for the better."

Quality Summer Programming

Interview with Paty Cordero and her children Victor, Karina & Loritza

As is tradition for Denver Inner City Parish's Summer Day Camp (SDC), this year's final day ended with a carnival. The kids were able to get their faces painted, earn tickets at fun games to win prizes, and even get to dunk their favorite SDC staff member in the dunk tank. Once the carnival was over and the dunk tank closed, I had the privilege of meeting with Paty Cordero and her three beautiful children.

How did you find out about the Denver Inner City Parish (DICP) and its Summer Day Camp Program (SDC)?

Paty: I heard by word of mouth, one of my cousins knew about the program and introduced me and another one of our cousins. Before that I had no contact with DICP. That was three years ago.

How many children do you have in SDC and how old are they? How many years have they attended SDC?

Paty: I have three children in SDC this year; Victor age 6, Karina age 8 & Loritza age 11. This is Victor's first year; both Karina and Loritza have been attending for 3 years.



What were the best pieces of SDC's programming this summer?

Victor: Swimming (He learned how to swim this summer).

Karina: Swimming and the two times we went for indoor skating.

Loritza: Cave of the Winds. This was the first year we went there and the cave was cool, really dark and different.

Paty: From my perspective, the talent show and theater presentations were great. The partnership with El Museo was a really good idea too.

What keeps you bringing your kids back?

Paty: There are many things that make me keep bringing my kids back: there are strict rules in place that help teach my kids to be responsible and respectful. It's affordable, the hours are great and allow me to work Monday through Friday and know that my kids are well taken care of. The kids have grown in reading, speaking and manners, they say things like 'excuse me' and 'try it again'. Beyond all of that are the great activities.



**DENVER
INNER
CITY
PARISH**

1212 Mariposa St
Denver, CO 80204

dicp.org

non profit org
us postage paid
Denver, CO
permit no.1034

Needs List

Your in-kind donations are just as important as your monetary donations. Here are some specific things we are looking for right now. Thank you so much for all of your generous support! Please contact our main office, 303.629.0636, for specifics on the drop off of in-kind items. **Also, we are currently looking to increase our food donations, contact Adrian Castro, Food Bank Director, for more information.**

La Academia Books (16 of each)
Soldier Boys by Dean Hughes
Escaping into the Night by D. Dina Friedman
Code Talkers by Joseph Bruchac
Zeitoun by Dave Eggers
The Plague by Albert Camus
Fiction/Non-Fiction Science Books--for titles
or more info contact Juanita, 303.629.0637

Recreation Needs

Foosball Table
Ping Pong Table
Bumper Pool Table

After School Programs

Crayons & Markers
Colored Pencils
Pencil Sharpeners

Paint
Glue (Stick & Liquid)
Sequins
Buttons
Beads
Board Games
Sports Balls (soccer, basketball etc.)
Ball Air Pump

Seniors Programs

King Soopers gift cards
Toaster (4 slices)
2 Large Coolers for Canned Beverages
2 Large Water Coolers w/ spout
Large Bingo Set
Coffee
Canned Milk
50-Cup Coffee Pot



2-3 Round Game Tables
Small Hygiene Products
Ziplock Bags (Quart or Gallon)
5-disc CD Player
Microphone/ PA system
Sturdy Easel/ Sandwich Board

Office Supplies

Pushpins
Cork Board
Dry Erase Markers
3-Hole Punch
Colored Paper (Letter size)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Cohen
Frank Debeck
Flora Jewell Stern--Co-Chair
Dave Kleinkopf--Co-Chair
Angie Leach
Craig Peña
Andrew Romero
Jack Smith
Joy Stewart
Bruce Thumm--Secretary
Sharon Worley--Treasurer

STAFF

Georgina Aragon--College View After School Program Director
Giorgio Carbajo--IT Manager
Adrian Castro--Food Bank Manager & Facilities Manager
D. Todd Clough--Executive Director
Destinee Duran--Teacher & Summer Day Camp Director
Hilary Engelhart--Development Assistant & Volunteer Coordinator
Belen Flores--College View Seniors Program Director & College View Food Bank Coordinator

Ana Garcia--After School Director
Cecilia Gutierrez--College View Office Manager
Guadalupe Herrera--910 Cook
Juanita Herrera--910 Office Manager
Marc-Paul Johnsen--Assistant Principal & Teacher
Steve Johnsen--Pastor
Pam Lewis--ReNew Job Coach
Rev. Richard Lewis--ReNew Co-Director
Monsita Lucero--Business Manager & Accountant
Evelyn Martinez--Driver

Larry Martinez--Director of Operations & Director of College View
Tille Martinez--Seniors Program Assistant
Jocelyn McNeely--Teacher
Carlo Nieto--910 & College View Janitor
Brandon Olszewski--Teacher
Morgan Olszewski--Development Director
Christina Perez--1212 Office Assistant
Fabian Perez--Seniors Cook
Chandrika Prem--Grants Manager & Marketing Manager

Charleen Ramirez-Mares--Principal
Rita Roberts--ReNew Case Manager
Rev. Allyson Sawtell--1212 Seniors Program Director & Associate Pastor
Tequa Stern--Teacher
Leonard Surprenant--GED Teacher
Christy Swainson--1212 Food Bank Coordinator
Nikkie Vigil--1212 Office Manager & Accounting Assistant
James Wallace--1212 Janitor