

Board of Directors

Cathy Sulzberger, Chair
Nicholette Smith-Bligen, Vice Chair
Stacie Banks, Secretary
Domingo Rodriguez, Treasurer
Ana Anders, Director
Douglas Bibby, Director
Kate Emanuel, Director
Linda Moore, Director
Veronica Parke, Director
Mark Stumpf, Director
Lori Vise, Director
Elsa Walsh, Director
Barbara Washburn, Director

STAFF

Department Heads and Program Managers

Lindsey Buss, President and CEO
Simone Hopkinson-Johnson, Child Development Center
Wanda Holmes, Children and Bridge
Timothy Jones, Teen and Satellite
Inge Ashley, Martha's Outfitters
Dominick Musso, Food and Facilities
Demetrios Recachinas, Food Services
Kimberly Lyons-Briley, Volunteer Services
Ann Haskins Brookover, Development
Valerie Walker, Finance and Administration
Bonnie Niles, Human Resources

Martha's Table Mission Statement

To help at-risk children, youth, families and individuals in our community improve their lives by providing educational programs, food, clothing, and enrichment opportunities.



Help us Grow! Support Martha's Table at the 2009 Help the Homeless Walkathon.

We need YOU. We hope you will join us on Saturday, November 21st on the National Mall for the 22nd Annual Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Walkathon. Martha's Table has been an active participant since the Walkathon's inception in 1988 and we need your help now more than ever! In order to maximize support from the Walkathon we need to have a total of **3,000** people walk for us. If we reach this goal we will receive **\$50,000**.

Come by yourself, as a family, organize a group of co-workers or a youth group and walk with the youth of Martha's Table, our volunteers and other supporters. The length of the walk is 5K and the route goes around the museums and the Tidal Basin. Register at www.helpthehomelessdc.org and please be sure to mark Martha's Table is your beneficiary.

If you are connected with a school, church or civic group and would like to help set up a mini-walk for younger children, please let us know. Mini-walks allow groups who cannot attend the main walk on the Mall to set up their own walks, which typically consist of an educational component on homelessness and a walk outside around your school, church or neighborhood. Martha's Table can assist with the educational session and orchestrating the walk. Please contact Kim Lyons at 202/328-6608 x232 or klyons@marthastable.org to find out more.

T-shirts are included in the entry fee—\$15 for youth (25 and under) and \$25 for adults. On November 21st, we will meet at 8:30 am in the area designated for Martha's Table. For more information on how to get involved and where to meet, call Kim at 202/328-6608 x232. We look forward to seeing you there.

Martha's Table is Blogging

Find out the latest about all of our activities at www.marthastableblog.blogspot.com



Martha's Table, Inc.

2114 14th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20009 • 202-328-6608 • www.marthastable.org

Fall 2009 Newsletter

Martha's Table salutes Lindsey Buss
2009 Exponent Award Recipient

Martha's Table is GROWING: Our Not So Secret Garden

Where do tomatoes come from? Or lettuce? Or peppers? For some kids, especially those who live in the inner city, these questions might not be all that easy to answer. Studies have shown that many children have no idea that vegetables grow in the ground and they also have no real understanding of the connection between what we eat and our health. Being able to make these connections is important as there is a direct correlation between the two. The percentage of obese children in the US today has more than doubled since 1970. Thirty five percent of American children are overweight, 25% are obese, and 14% have type 2 diabetes, which until recently had only been seen in adults. But there are solutions to these problems—and one of them is to get children involved in growing a garden. Research by Texas A&M University, for example, shows the connection between kids' food gardens and improved nutrition, and this view is supported by innovative thinkers like Chef Alice Waters, whose "edible schoolyard" in a California middle school has helped thousands of children experience the joy, satisfaction, and healthy eating habits that come from eating what

you grow.

Last May, Martha's Table decided to make its own garden to help our kids learn more about the food they eat. This project certainly had its challenges, not the least of which was that the available space to house our garden was an asphalt parking lot next to the children's playground. But with some creative thinking and quite a bit of

Continues on page 2



In This Issue

- Our Not So Secret Garden
- A Letter from Lindsey
- Summer Activities at Martha's Table
- A Martha's Outfitters Success Story
- 2009 Help the Homeless Walkathon

UW #8445 CFC #29262
www.marthastable.org

A Letter from Lindsey

I am grateful and honored to have received the Exponent Award from the Meyer Foundation for 2009. As with probably all honorees for such an award, my first reaction is that I accept it on behalf of the entire Martha's Table community. There are so many people that make us successful: our clients, our donors, our volunteers.

The people I want to highlight especially are the 73 staff members of Martha's Table. When I am out speaking with supporters or other members of the community, I am often on the receiving end of compliments for their work and I am always trying to find ways to ensure that our staff knows how much the community appreciates them.

The Exponent Award is the latest example of this. The breadth and effectiveness of our services is only possible because of the breadth of skills and depth of commitment of our staff. Timothy Jones is renowned throughout youth development circles for his creative programming. Wanda Holmes runs one of only two nationally accredited after-school programs in the city. Simone Johnson is the hardest working person in the city in early childhood education, earning essential trust from our children and their parents. Inge

Ashley's "boutique" clothing room is so nice, it draws referrals for free clothing and bargain shoppers from across the region. Valerie Walker has engineered bringing our important finance function in house, which had been outsourced for the first 27 years of our existence. Ann Brookover has raised the money to allow us to serve our growing number of clients during these incredible financial times, implementing the use of a variety of social media and enhancing our volunteer operations. Dominick Musso

Continues on page 3



Our Not So Secret Garden, continued from page 1
 elbow grease the garden began to take shape. With time to spare to take advantage of the spring growing season, we built a garden of raised wooden beds, which contained tomatoes, peppers, marigolds, mint, red bell peppers, Russian kale, and bean sprouts.

Demetri Recachinas, Manager of the Martha's Table Food Program, headed up our garden efforts. He took the lead in assembling a core group of supporters and volunteers to make it a reality. Martha's Table also reached out to the community for support in this program. Several local merchants donated seedlings, supplies and expertise. Volunteers worked on constructing the raised wooden garden beds, and then the children worked at planting the seedlings. The help of the teachers in taking ownership of this project has allowed it to be successful.

We have also started to develop a curriculum to educate the children about nutrition, healthy eating, and the dangers of obesity. Staff members and interns have been working to bring an educational component to our garden project. Through a collaborative effort staff members, interns, and volunteers from the community, we are currently developing the curriculum for children ages 2-7. It is a 16-week program that includes "Nutrition Detectives" for the older of these children, encouraging them to closely read food labels. Lessons include trips to grocery stores and local farms to discuss the origins of the food that the children eat. The curriculum includes three main sections – nutrition, physical activity, and cooking.

The ultimate goal of our garden project is to use the produce to make healthy meals with the children and their families. The first year's crop has been harvested and we are already planning for next year's planting season.



Kids GROW at Martha's Table: Summer Activities at Martha's Table

Summertime at Martha's Table is always busy, and this summer was no exception. All summer long the children and youth who attend Martha's Table programs engaged in a variety of activities that kept them learning, engaged, happy and safe.

For the children in our Child Development Center (for children 3 months- 4 years old), summer was a time to play outside, plant seeds in the garden, sing, dance, learn and in general have a great time. On August 20th, we celebrated the accomplishments of the youngest members of our Children's Programs with a graduation ceremony. The proud graduates are now attending kindergarten.

Kids in the Elementary (5-9 years old) and Bridge (10-13 years old) programs also had a very full summer. These children participated in a number of workshops including: Science, Media/Communications, Music and Physical Education. The workshops enabled staff to provide students with new and enriching activities and experiences such as

taking a tour of the Washington Times Newspaper then honing their writing and reporting skills by creating a classroom newspaper of their own. The children also did research on various plants and wildlife and then gained practical knowledge of their subjects by visiting the Botanical Gardens and the National Zoo. For the Physical Education workshop the children attended basketball camp with the Washington Mystics Basketball team and participated in a tennis program. Finally, they learned about music through activities and song and also attended a concert. The children in the Bridge also completed some community service this summer by helping out 2-3 times a week in the Martha's Table kitchen, making meals for our McKenna's Wagon mobile soup kitchen. The summer ended on a high note with the children holding an end of summer celebration where they performed for their parents and friends.

Our Teens highlighted their summer accomplishments at an Open House hosted at Club Jin on 14th St. The teens showcased their talents and showed off their summer accomplishments in a variety of different ways. They created a Martha's Table magazine, *Modern Teen* and expressed themselves through different mediums such as; abstract art, Public Service Announcements, mock newscasts,

play writing and acting, fashion and t-shirt design. They worked so hard this summer and it really showed during the fantastic open house. We are also delighted to announce that all of our seniors graduated high school, and are now college freshmen! We are looking forward to finding out how their first semester went when they come home at the Thanksgiving break.



Growth can be hard — a Martha's Outfitters Success Story

Oliver had a very hard life. He had used drugs for a number of years and he ended up living on the streets. Oliver would try from time to time to put his life back together and get a job and stay off drugs. But more often than not, something would go wrong and he would start using drugs again, lose his job and often his place to live. Finally Oliver, as he said "got sick and tired of being sick and tired" and his life began to change. Oliver started to attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and he was able to stay off drugs and he found and kept a job. And he also found Martha's Outfitters, the clothing distribution center and thrift store run by Martha's Table. Oliver came to Martha's Outfitters originally because he needed clothing for work. With a referral from another social service agency, he was able to pick out several changes of clothing and take the first steps towards a new life. Oliver's life is very different now than it had been, he has a job and a place to live and he continues to visit Martha's Outfitters regularly—but this time it is to buy items for his new apartment. Oliver credits Martha's Outfitters for helping him to change his life.

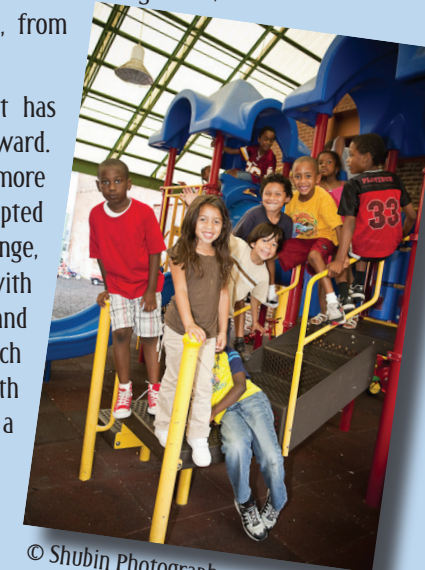
We hope that you will join us at Martha's Outfitter's 5th Anniversary which will run the week of October 20th-24th with special activities each day ending with a celebration on October 24th between 11 am and 1 pm.

Letter from Lindsey, continued from page 1

has somehow managed to serve a rapidly growing need for our food services, while attacking our expenses so aggressively that he has reduced our costs.

As I recognize the senior staff of Martha's Table, I know that if you asked them about how they have achieved their success, they would in turn credit the staff and volunteers in their programs. Working at a social service nonprofit during the recession is challenging and uncertain, but the past year has been marked by our staff's positive attitude and mutual support. As departments have faced problems, staff from other departments have pitched in to help, provided words of encouragement, and boosted morale in a variety of ways, from potlucks to kickball.

This is the staff that has earned the Exponent Award. It is one that has done more with less, quickly adapted to the next challenge, overcome problems with creative solutions, and been willing to help each other out. Working with them is a privilege and a daily inspiration.



© Shubin Photography

*Martha's Table is the best
 We had so much fun with Ms. Tiffany and Ms. Nef
 Learning new things to help us in school
 And taking fun trips like to the swimming pool
 This summer sure was cool
 Oh and Classroom C, we rule!
 We just wanted to say thanks
 We are glad we were here
 Without a doubt we'll be back next year!*

