Winter 2003 Program Update

The Governor General Attends the Opening of the New Focus Photo Gallery



Governor General at the opening of the Focus Gallery

On April 1st, 2004, Regent Park Focus was honoured to welcome Their Excellencies Adrienne Clarkson, our Governor General and John Ralston Saul, and an entourage of reporters for the opening of the new Focus Photo Gallery. This event featured a youth presentation of selected media arts projects produced by young people involved in Regent Park Focus. The presentation included videos, Linker computer art pieces, radio excerpts, soundscapes and the photography exhibit. In her closing remarks, Her Excellency expressed admiration for the quality of the work. The visit concluded with a Catch da Flava Radio interview with Focus member Justin Woza Goldenthal-Walters. The interview can be heard on the online radio archives at www.catchdaflava.com.

The Zapporoli Studio for Photography

The newly built Focus Photo Gallery is now open to all! The aim of the gallery is to showcase the art of emerging photographers and present works that are relevant to residents of the community. The first exhibit, Portrait of the Neighbourhood, features a selection of works that capture the people and places in Regent Park and its surrounding neighbourhood. These slice-of-life captions were created by youth and chosen for their lighting effects, conveyed emotion and composition. The Focus Gallery is open on Mondays through Wednesdays from 10:30am to 5:00pm. Appointments can be made to view the gallery at other times by calling (416) 863-1074.



Snapshots participants with instructor Carey Chisholm

Following the Portrait of the Neighbourhood exhibit, the gallery is scheduled to feature work selected from the two very successful sessions of the Snapshots Photography Program. The Snapshots Photography Program was created in partnership with Gallery 44 and gave young people free darkroom experience under the guidance of a professional photographer and a chance to have their pieces displayed at downtown art galleries. This year, Snapshots was taught by Carey Chisholm.

Graduates of the Snapshots Photography Program can continue to enhance their skills by participating in Journeys, an upcoming oral history photography project that documents people's experiences of moving to Regent Park. For more information about our photography workshops, please call (416) 863-1074.

Catch da Flava Radio



Shameer and Emmanuel preparing for the radio show

Catch da Flava Radio provides a place for youth to discuss and explore subjects that affect them and their community. This winter Catch da Flava Radio covered an incredibly diverse array of topics such as the role of Canada's Governor General, youth violence, school dress codes, Black History Month and corporate billboards. You can catch Catch da Flava Radio on the first and third Tuesday of every month on CKLN 88.1FM at 7:20pm-8:00pm, or you can join our live audience. Catch da Flava Radio is entirely youth-hosted and produced.

Catch da Flava Newspaper

The winter 2003 issue of Catch da Flava online and print newspaper focused on art and activism. Featured articles discussed the Peace Taxi project and the reclamation of public space from advertisers. Other articles included a description of a young man's experience of the civil war in Sudan, the Sexpert column and many other entertaining and informative pieces. Catch da Flava is a quarterly newspaper that is distributed to households, schools and community centres across the GTA. The online version of the current issue can be found at www.catchdaflava.com. If you would like to obtain a hard copy of the most recent issues, please call (416) 863-1074.

The Art of Cool

The Regent Park Focus continues to work with various elementary and secondary schools through the Art of Cool. This program is designed to engage students in important social issues through video production and photography.



Art of Cool participants at Nelson Mandela Park School

This winter students at the Nelson Mandela Park School completed the filming of Trickster's Tale, a video about bullying. Students at Regent Park Duke of York Public School also completed their video It Wasn't Me. This video revolves around conflict and false accusations. Finally, Focus has begun working with students from Eastern Commerce to create video public service announcements on subjects that concern youth. After these videos are edited, program participants at each of these schools will disseminate the videos to their school community as a way of educating other students about their concerns.



Art of Cool Participants at Eastern Commerce High School

The Youth Employment Program

This March, Focus welcomed three new youth staff members. Over the next few months, Fenide Herard, Tyrone MacLean-Wilson and Shakib Toukalah will assist in various production activities including audio and video editing as well as attend various leadership workshops. Fenide, Tyrone and Shakib came to Focus as part of an Out of School, Out of Work Youth Employment Training Program run in partnership with the Woodgreen Youth Employment Centre.

The Divas Girls' Club

Focus has recently added the Divas Girls' Club to our list of ongoing programs. The Divas meet every Tuesday from 5pm-7pm at the Regent Park Focus (600 Dundas St. E., rear basement). The club is open to all females between the ages of 12-15. Its aim is to balance the male testosterone levels and encourage the participation of young women in the Focus community. Members bond through games, photography, discussions on issues that affect girls and many other cool activities. For more information, please call Pat at (416) 863-1074.