



## Racial Justice Award Winner

On Point for College's Program Director, Sam Rowser, received the Racial Justice Award from the InterFaith Works of Central New York's "Community Wide Dialogue to End Racism." The Committee's Director, Beth Broadway, stated, "Congratulations on the fine work that On Point for College is doing in our community, and for the Racial Justice Awardee in your midst." Sam was honored at the Committee's "Family Reunion" at Syracuse Stage event on March 11<sup>th</sup>.



Sam with grandchildren who visited at our office on this birthday in January.

The mission of On Point for College is to open the doors  
To higher education for inner city youth;  
to break down the barriers that hinder potential  
students from entering college; and to provide  
support that empowers them to succeed.

## Meet Rhea Parks, our new College Admission Counselor

In October On Point for College welcomed new staff member, Rhea Parks. Rhea has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and a Master's Degree in Sports Management from Canisius College. She grew up in Syracuse and now resides here with her husband, Ricky.



Mentor Mary Ann Laidlaw greets On Point's newest counselor, Rhea Parks

## Viewpoint by Ginny Donohue: Mentors and Miracles...

Yes, I am convinced the two are connected. Mentors always fill in and provide the support—hands, hearts, guidance, and transportation—that our staff doesn't have the time or resources to offer ourselves. Let's see 84 students at Thanksgiving and another 74 youth for semester break received rides or bus tickets. A mentor had the flexibility to pick up a young man from Genesee Community College who needed emergency dental care and then bring him back two days later. And of course a mentor, who is also a Board Member, Dr. Fred Gilbeaux, provided the emergency dental care.

Some our mentors have taken our students shopping for food or put them up in hotels to get a good's night sleep before a placement exam. Others have housed students during holiday breaks when they had no place to call home. Marty Levine provides eyeglasses for students who need them.

And a few years ago, mentors, Robbie Harrington and Tom Coman, found housing for one of our Sudanese students who was accepted at the University of Buffalo but had missed the housing deadline. They secured a room at a nearby rectory of a priest. Carrying the suffering of the Christian Sudanese in his heart, the priest was happy to accommodate our student. For years, his mind's eye had held an image of a little Sudanese boy from a "Dateline" documentary he'd seen 8 years ago. When he showed the video to Fidele Dhan, our student proclaimed, "Why that's me, I'm the little boy." They both experienced the miracle of a life time.



**Miracles at On Point for College... Well, when our mentors truly connect with our students, anything is possible.**

## On Point for College—Board of Directors—2007-2008

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A United Way Agency

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## Community Investment Spotlight— Charlie Miller

At On Point for College’s Annual Celebration 2007, Charlie Miller received our *Make a Difference Award*. Charlie learned about the program through his fellow church member (Erwin First Untied Methodist Church), Sue Freeman, who is also a mentor. She had arranged a meeting with Ginny after a Sunday morning service for those who had expressed an interest in soliciting supplies or driving students.

Charlie decided to become a mentor, because, and he says, “I was nearing retirement and I thought this was volunteer job I would like to do.” When he describes his favorite part of mentoring, he concludes, “I enjoy hearing the dreams and expectations that some of them share. The thanks that many of the students give are also very rewarding.”

Charlie doesn’t just drive one student now and then. He has loaded up the church’s van and transported 6 to 10 youth for every major holiday and semester break since he started mentoring. “I recognize how important college is today and enjoy helping in any way I can to facilitate better careers for today’s young adults.”



Charlie Miller & Sue Freeman with SUNY Delhi students Adara, Angelica & Chantea.

Photo by: Brantley Carroll Photography

Thank you to Charlie and all our mentors who give so generously of their time and resources, **you make all the difference in helping our students succeed at college.**

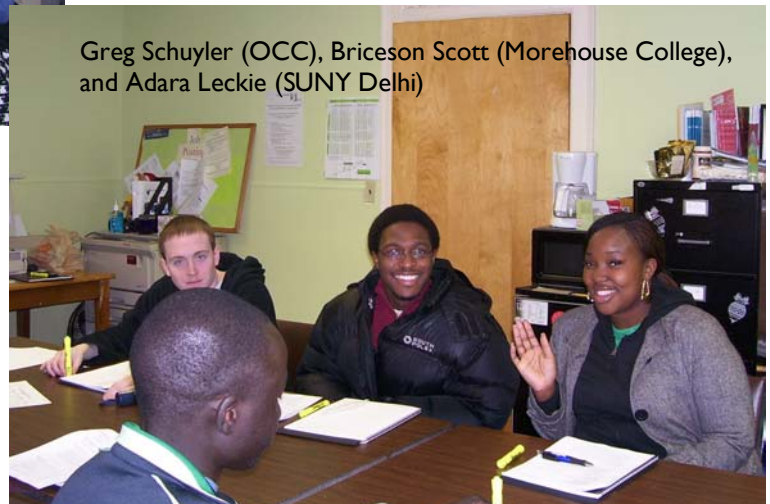


Retention Counselor, Jaime Grillo, engaged students in dialogue during a Study Skills Workshop over January break.

**On Point for College student will pursue PhD—**  
Dimitri Vaughn will graduate from SUNY Albany in May with a Bachelor’s Degree in Chemistry & Math and then enroll in Penn State on full scholarship to begin work on his PhD. next fall. While at SUNY Albany, Dimitri coordinated Early Awareness “College is Possible” presentations at an inner city high school in Albany.

### 17 Students Attend Study Skills Workshops in January

On Point for College’s Jaime Grillo started a new series of Study Skills Workshops on the January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Students openly discussed their greatest academic challenges. Jaime explained the causes of text anxiety and tips for reducing anxiety as well as how to tackle different types of exams and proactive strategies for preparing for them. Participants received complimentary planners and highlighters to boost their study skills.



Greg Schuyler (OCC), Briceson Scott (Morehouse College), and Adara Leckie (SUNY Delhi)

**Please join us for the  
5th Annual Gospel Breakfast**

to raise funds to send our youth to college

Date: **April 19th, 2008 9:00am-12:00noon**

Location: **Dr. King Elementary School,  
416 E. Raynor Avenue**

Gospel entertainment by:

- **Charles Cannon and the Bells of Harmony**
- **Bellegrove Missionary Baptist Church Youth Department**
- **Prince of Peace Puppet Ministry**
- **Other local talents**
- **Call On Point for College at 362-5003 for tickets**



Sponsored by:

**Rev. Joseph & Mrs. Gladys McElroy**

**University College ~ Mercy Works**

**Gus' Buses ~ Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church**

**What's it take to succeed at college?**

Besides the traditional SQ3R – Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review method—and knowing how to get along with a roommate?

Time Management      College Attendance/Expectations

Navigating Registration      Calculating Your GPA

Study Habits      Understanding Financial Aid

Utilizing Campus Resources      Staying Healthy

All these topics and more are covered in On Point for College's Pre-college Orientation, held throughout the summer months and each January.

**Calmesha Givens**, a young woman full of ambition and heart, will graduate from Howard University on May 10, 2008. Her positive attitude, self-assurance, and sophistication have come with sacrifice and hard work as she has faced down adversity more than once.

At age five, both of her parents were sentenced to prison for peddling. Her mother after serving six years of incarceration is now very supportive and hardworking. She has also reunited with her father who served eleven years in prison. Ms. Givens knew she was headed in the wrong direction in high school when she began to "hang with a gang". Then she began to focus on school and became the president of her senior class at Corcoran High School. She met Samuel Rowser, during her tenth grade school year. With On Point for College's help she enrolled in the Fashion Institute of Technology, and then transferred to Genesee Community College, and then onto Howard University to pursue a degree in Administration of Justice.

For three semesters at Howard, Calmesha commuted to college while she managed a full course load and a job at a retail store, where she was promoted to Assistant Manager. "Funding my education has been challenging, it is a sacrifice that I know is worthwhile," she stated. Summer of 2007 she applied for and received a—Lester Mightly and Thurgood Marshall Scholarships. This past fall semester she concentrated solely on academics and did not work, and she earned a 3.8.

Calmesha has interned with the City of Syracuse in both the law and business departments during the summer. Currently, she has an internship in Washington D.C working for the National Bar Association. She now has aspirations to attend Business School, and after that, Law School. By the way she sets high expectations for herself, she is sure to achieve her goals. One key to her success—not being afraid to ask for assistance from On Point for College (e.g. transfer guidance, last dollar grants, assistance with graduate school applications, and of course, keeping in touch with staff, so that we help to continue with keeping her "on point" for college.)

**"The most important moment in my life," she declares, "will be when I can say to myself, 'while my career pursuits have been an incredible, and at times, challenging journey, they have indeed resulted in a significant and satisfying position in life.'"**



**Save the Date:**

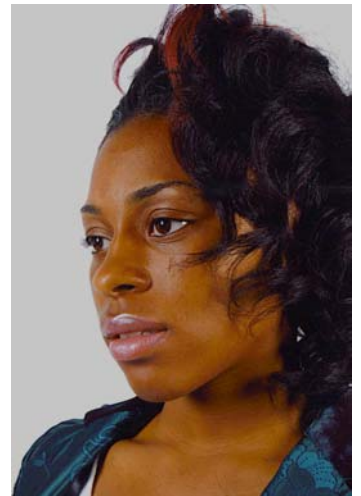
**On Point for College's  
2nd Annual Golf Outing  
September 19, 2008  
at The Links**

**Presenting Sponsors:**

**Alliance Bank & Syracuse Orthopedic Specialists**

**Please consider assembling a 4-some  
or becoming a sponsor**

**Call Theresa at 362-5003 for details**



## More Student Spotlights...

Coming from a single parent family, **Lawrence Denson** found the extra support from On Point for College very helpful from the provision of basic college supplies, shopping for clothes, to developing a goal-oriented mindset. **Linking up with a program mentor, Sam Lanzafame, corporate executive and former Board member, helped him not only transition to college but also gain an appreciation into the world of finance.**

Sam's positive coaching about and knowledge of the corporate sector fostered his understanding about how to value a company, and the skills set for the corporate world. The two met two-three times per year and communicated by e-mail.

As a May Bachelor's Degree candidate at Notre Dame, Lawrence has learned the art of time management—balancing academics and extracurricular pursuits—and networking for his personal and professional development. In fact, this remarkable young man has secured a job in *Equities and Derivatives* with Goldman Sachs in New York City upon graduation.

He's worked hard to achieve this goal. Lawrence admits, "I was the king of office hours and emailed my professors, and sat at the front of the class." "The Career Center knows my face." "It's not who you know, it's who knows you." Lawrence spent his summer between junior and senior years as an intern for Goldman Sachs. It wasn't easy to get his foot in the door and he utilized sports and his sense of humor to transcend race and his lack of connections to Wall Street, which many of his fellow interns had. In regard to giving back to his community, Lawrence would like to share his lessons and provide job shadowing or other networking experiences for On Point for College youth in the future.



**Dexter McKinney** majors in Information Management & Technology with a focus on project management at Syracuse University. He learned about On Point for College through his sister, who is now a college student at Long Island University. As a first generation college student, Dexter has benefited most from the program's solid support system to which he referred, **"I always knew I could turn to On Point for College and had someone to call if I needed guidance."**

For the summer of 2007, On Point for College facilitated his internship at NIKE through its connection with Howard H. White, V.P. of NIKE Jordan, who was the keynote speaker at our Celebration event in November 2006. And last summer Dexter experienced the internship of a lifetime. He worked at NIKE world headquarters in Beaverton, Washington and traveled to Paris, Italy, Greece, and Amsterdam as well. He helped develop a web interface to facilitate secure access for visitors to NIKE and then witnessed its implementation. Both Howard H. White and Phil Knight provided mentoring about work and life.

While his principal duties involved IT work, he also met with other divisions and gained further insight into the world of business. Dexter experienced many aspects of management, teamwork and its camaraderie, and he learned how to meet deadlines in the workplace. He had worked at Carrier the previous summer in the IT Department.

Dexter is one of Syracuse's talented inner city youth who was bound to succeed at whatever he applied himself. On Point for College has provided the continuity of support and a special internship to ensure that he not only graduates from Syracuse University this May but that he has the opportunity to soar...

# 5th Annual On Point for College Celebration 2007

Annual Dinner and Silent Auction

Presented by

**nationalgrid**



Master of Ceremonies, Theodora James,  
and Keynote Speaker, Willis Amica

Pat Miller of Herkimer Community College  
receives her "Campus Angel" award.



Jaime Grillo and staff present Tanya Lane-  
Martin with her "Campus Angel" Award.



**Other Sponsors for the evening included:**

**On Point for College-Board of Directors ~ Anaren, Inc. ~ Kiwanis Club of Dewitt ~ Syracuse Sunrise Rotary ~ Empower Federal Credit Union ~ AXA Advisors ~ Excellus Health Plan Inc. ~ Edward & Frances Smith ~ Green & Seifter, CPA ~ Manlius Pebble Hill School ~ Raulli & Sons, Inc. ~ Scolaro, Shulman, Cohen, Fetter & Burstein ~ Mark Paciorek, DDS ~ Onondaga Community College ~ Branch's Driving School.**

## Wondering how you might do some good with this spring's Federal Tax Refund?

- Help stimulate our local economy while you give On Point for College a financial boost:
  - Buy college supplies for our youth, see below or
  - Make a cash donation to On Point for College;
- It takes about \$1,000 to help a young person enroll in college and provide them with college supplies, enrollment deposit, and textbooks for their first year.

### On Point for College Partners

Yes, I would like to give to On Point for College, a 501 (c)(3) organization. Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to be *Founder's Circle Member* with an annual pledge of \$1,000. Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please indicate your form of payment:

Check (Make checks payable to On Point for College)  Credit Card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express)  Gift of Stock

#### For Credit Card users only:

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

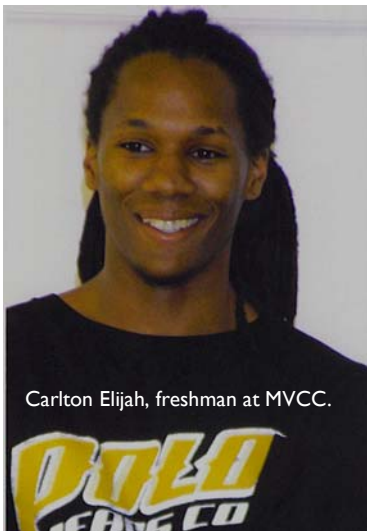
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much. All gifts are tax deductible for income tax purposes.

Please mail this form with your contribution to:

**Attn: Ginny Donohue, On Point for College, Inc., 1654 W. Onondaga St. Syracuse, NY 13204**

Please contact our office at 315-362-5003 if you would like to include On Point for College in your will.



Carlton Elijah, freshman at MVCC.

**Donation of New Supplies** - Each incoming freshman receives a backpack full of college supplies, bedding (including twin sheet set, pillow and comforter), bath towels, wash cloths—**dark colors preferred**. Other supplies we provide to the students include: pens, pencils, highlighters, 5-subject notebooks (with pockets), calculators, blank CD-RW, dictionary, toothbrush, comb, electric alarm clock and full sizes of the following: shampoo, conditioner, lotion, deodorant, and toothpaste. New college students also receive a one-time \$150 cash allowance for the purchase of new school clothes.

#### Other Ways to Help On Point for College:

**Mentors/Volunteers**— Help the staff members provide advice, guidance and advocacy to youth to foster their successful college experience or transition to the workplace.

**Volunteer Drivers**— Transport college students back and forth to college for holidays and semester breaks. Drivers enjoy the unique opportunity to bond with our students during these rides.

- **Since 1999, 1,329 On Point for College youth have enrolled in 155 colleges and universities.**
- **98% of these college students are the first person in their family to attend college.**
- **With the help of volunteers, 424 college students received rides to and from college during the past year.**
- **Our college students gave “College Is Possible” early awareness presentations to over 1,800 youth, ages 8 to 15, in 2007.**
- **On Point for College is recognized as Best Practice Program both The Lumina Foundation for Education and the National College Access Network.**

Mentor Marty Levine and Justin Mann  
(internship in North Carolina this semester)



