

CHILDREN OF THE CITY

ISSUE **15** CHANGING THE CULTURE OF POVERTY THROUGH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



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Eli Manning with COC students at our 2012 Charity Bowl

2012 CHARITY BOWL

The 2012 David Tyree Charity Bowl proved to be a resounding success thanks in large part to the support of New York Giants MVP quarterback **Eli Manning** and numerous teammates in attendance. The event was held at Chelsea Piers 300 New York Bowl, set against stunning views of the Hudson River.

Coming off the recent 2012 Super Bowl win, Giants players including **Victor Cruz**, **Hakeem Nicks** and **Justin Tuck** mingled with star-struck guests throughout the evening. Players spent time bowling on each of the individual lanes, swapping football stories and

taking pictures with the guests. The VIP cocktail lounge gave guests a chance to have face-to-face time with Eli Manning.



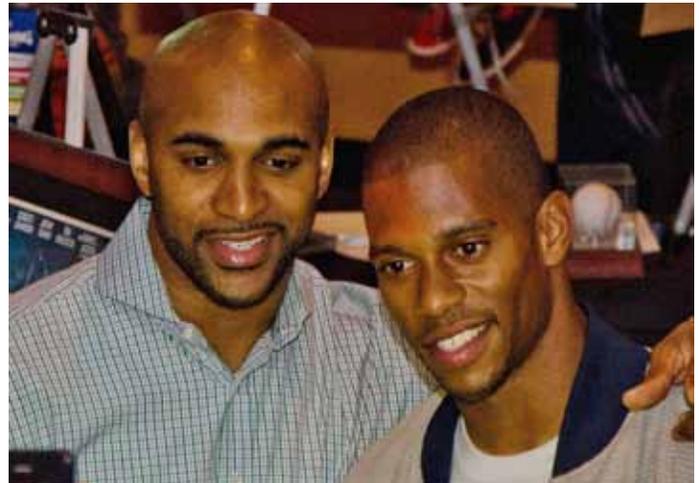
Eli Manning on the lanes

Hosted by Children of the City Board member and former Giants player **David Tyree**, the evening featured a silent and live auction in addition to a spectacular array of hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. The highlight of the evening came as Eli Manning, surrounded by his team, addressed the crowd and declared his support for the work being done by Children

of the City and how thrilled he was to be a part of the evening. *[continued]*

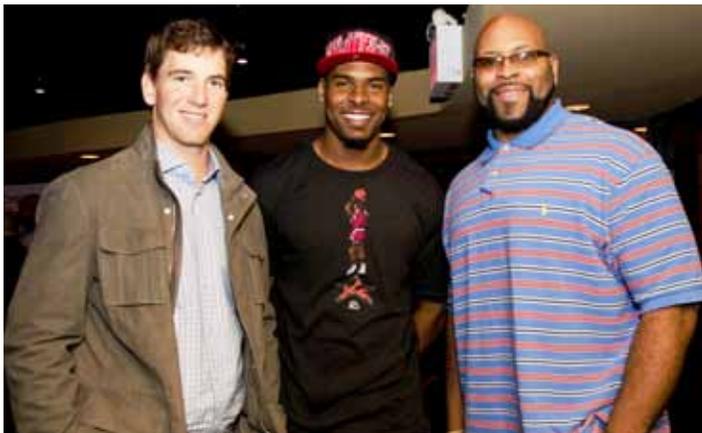
2012 CHARITY BOWL

“We are elated and honored that the New York Giants gave so generously of their time and partnered with us to address the many obstacles these children have to face on a daily basis.” said Joyce Mattera, Founder and Executive Director of Children of the City. “In a community with a



David Tyree and Victor Cruz

48% dropout rate and 1 out of 4 living in abject poverty, Children of the City is dedicated to changing the culture of poverty. We are grateful that our friends and guests were able to come together to enjoy such an extraordinary evening and support the work we are doing.”



Eli Manning and Giants players



Giants players and guests



Councilwoman Sara Gonzalez, Manning, Tyree, and guest



Giants players

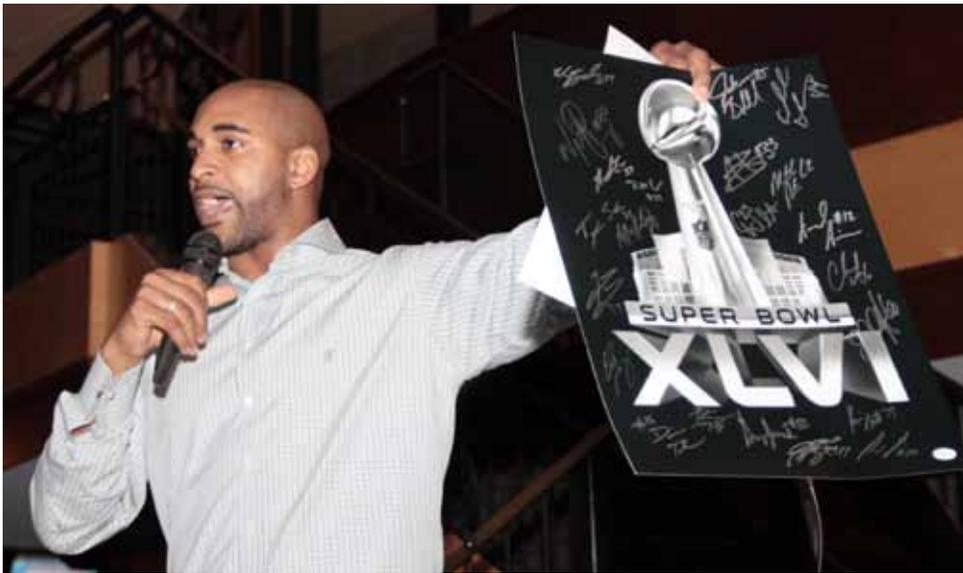
2012 CHARITY BOWL



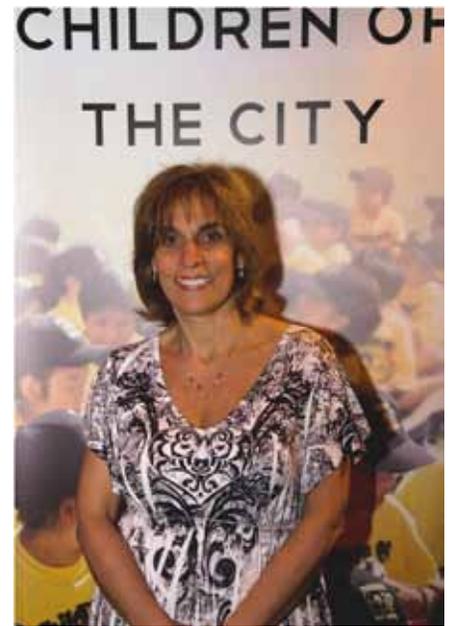
Kenny Phillips



Bishop Joseph Matterra, Tiki Barber, Councilwoman Gonzalez



David Tyree



Joyce Matterra, Executive Director



Chad Reyes and guests



TransCanada attendees

COLLEGE BOUND & SAT PROGRAM

Children of the City is thrilled with the results of its expanded assistance to high school juniors and seniors. Having concluded the third year of our College Bound program, we are confident that our comprehensive approach is working.

All of the participating students were at risk of dropping out of high school and faced obstacles such as difficult home environments, negative peer pressure, behavioral problems at home and at school, and difficulty staying focused and completing assignments. Continued support from Children of the City has kept them on track to realize their dream of college enrollment, and the results were astounding!



the second year in a row Kaplan SAT Prep Classes has provided all resources at no charge to high school juniors whose families do not have the financial means to pay for these services.

“I’m not good at standardized tests, so I didn’t know what to expect when I signed up for the course...but my score went up 230 points!”
-Daniel B., student

The results of their SAT scores play a large role in determining college acceptance. Our goal is to ensure each student has the opportunity to pursue a college degree.

We found that the students we worked with were eager to learn and excited by the prospect of the bright future a strong academic background will provide. “Seeing

the students make progress throughout the sessions as they work hard and take time out to study is incredible motivation. The practice tests show improvement. The results of vocabulary tests get the students excited,” shared one of the New York Cares tutors, Jin.

Through the College Bound Project, Children of the City also provides mentoring, application assistance, parent meetings, and guidance to high school juniors and seniors. When given the opportunity to make this future a reality, they excel in ways they never imagined possible.

“They really have an opportunity here. Students have attained large score increases from the diagnostic exam - between 200 and 650 point improvements!”
-Nancy, NY Cares



“My SAT scores on the practice exams went from 1150 to 1730! I also got better grades in my classes at school.”
-Wendy C., student

The 8-month prep-course would normally be priced at nearly \$2,000 per student, but for

2012 CARNIVAL



Our Community Carnival was jam packed with free festivities on Saturday, June 9th.

The laughter of children discovering the bouncy ride and many tables offering face-painting and games filled the afternoon. In an effort to provide area families with a safe and fun environment to enjoy a carefree day among their neighbors in the community, Children of the City has organized this annual event for the last 13 years.

Groups of volunteers worked alongside COC staff to put together a day that included live music, a watermelon eating contest, tug-of-war, relay races, and more. Hundreds meandered the carnival with free hotdogs clutched in their hands and faces brightly painted. Parents were

able to learn about a variety of resources available to them and also had a chance to enroll their children for COC's summer program. Children of the City continued its partnership with Health Plus Amerigroup and recruited volunteers from all over New York for the event.

“Our goal is to provide a place where children can learn, play and be safe,” said Joyce Mattera, Founder and Executive Director. “Every year over 10 million children are involved in violence in schools. West Brooklyn has over 28% of children living below the poverty line. We need out-of-school programs

with affordable activities that will engage them in learning. This event speaks to the very mission of Children of the City. We have a year-round after-school program as well as monthly Saturday events that meet the diverse needs of academic and social development for children.”



Islam's Story

We often take for granted the opportunities we've been given to pursue our dreams. The following is Islam's story, a young man who tutors at COC.

“What if your dreams were demolished? You are the only one who could save those dreams. At that point you pretend to be a superhero and want to make changes. Yet you have to overcome many challenges in order to reach that goal.”

Those were the words of one of COC's newest tutors as he sat in Joyce's office. This is the rest of his story.

“My father was an intelligent and motivated man. He always wanted to become a college professor, but he couldn't attend college. As the oldest son out of nine siblings, he decided to forget about his dreams and do something for his family. He left his motherland at seventeen and traveled to the United States, leaving his dreams behind. My mother's dreams were to go to college and get a good job, but she never got that opportunity. She didn't have the proper status to get married to an educated man, so she married my father. That was the end to all of her dreams of being educated and doing something more. A year later, I was born.



My parents weren't familiar with the education system in the United States. They didn't know what the best school was or what approach to take in order to guide me properly. I didn't have family members or friends here to help me. Since we came from low income families, we basically lived in hell. My neighborhood had many gangs - I'd watch elders perform illegal activities. My friends and I would mimic their behaviors and try to act like them.

My high school was big and was full of cliques. I ended up getting involved in one of these cliques and couldn't get out of it. We were teenagers who were immature; we followed each other. We didn't have the judgment to make good decisions, and we were doing whatever we wanted to do without thinking about our future. Before I knew it, I had fallen into a trap. I made horrible decisions; all the wrong choices.



Islam with some of his students

For three years of my life I been gangbanging, taking drugs, and not going to school - education didn't matter to me at all.

I had no idea what I was going to do with my life. The easy way was to just drop out,

Islam's Story, continued



sell drugs or work a 9-to-5 and make minimum wage. There were times I would stay up all night and get so depressed 'til the point where I just wanted to end my life. I had so much pain inside me and today when someone looks into my eyes, he or she can see the same pain. I missed out on a lot of knowledge that I should have received.

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The last year of high school I tried my best to recover from my lost years. I truly realized my passion in life when I had my first job experience. At age fourteen I applied for Summer Youth. I was selected in the lottery and chose to work for Children of the City as an assistant tutor.

On my first day at work I met two young kids. They were brothers, and I saw in them a mirror image of me and my own younger brother, making me all the more intent on helping them. Christopher was a freshman in high school and had troubles with his algebra Regents, which I was great at. I helped him study

for the Regents and he helped me by allowing me to find my true purpose in life. I changed tremendously as a person and ever since feel much more of a sense of responsibility.

I have recently been accepted to various colleges, and I hope to become the first college graduate in my family. I have been working at Children of the City for the past year and each day I realize that I want to help my students get more opportunities. I want these kids to have an advantage to improve academically and mentally from a person who went through struggles. Most of the children here are from

low income families and their lives are something I can relate to because I grew up the same way. It's giving me the chance to redeem myself and guide them to a better path than my own. I feel like a light pointing kids in the right direction

so that they will never fall through the cracks."



Children of the City Goes Green

To receive our newsletter electronically, please send your preferred email address to info@childrenofthecity.org

Changing the World Together



"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

-Mother Teresa

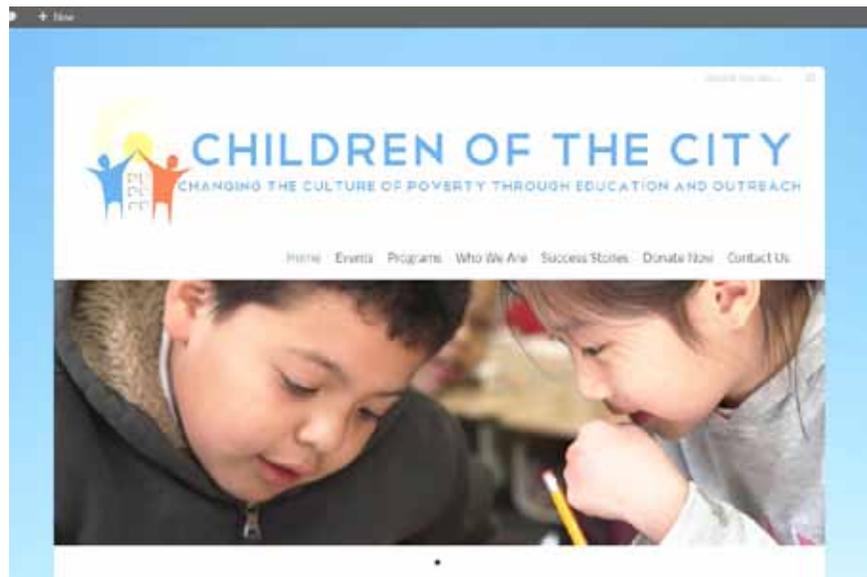
COC HAS A NEW LOOK!

Children of the City recently released a new logo design, visually reaffirming our commitment to under-served communities.



We also just launched our brand new website, featuring a media-rich interface, sleek design, and improved navigation. Please take a look and let us know what you think!

www.childrenofthecity.org



We invite you to join us as we work to meet the needs of these extraordinary children and families. For more information, visit us at childrenofthecity.org or call (718) 436-0242, ext. 18.

Thank you for your much-needed support!