

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

FROM THE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PG 1

CHRISTMAS: A SEASON  
OF GIVERS  
PG 2

NAVELI'S STORY  
PG 4

GALA 2008  
PG 4

EVENT WATCH  
PG 4

JANUARY  
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2008



# CHILDREN of the city

## From the E.D.

As 2008 begins, we reflect on some of the great strides we have made this past year. We've increased our board with some wonderful new members who will be a great asset to the organization as we continue to grow. We were also privileged to have Dr. Salvatore Ferrara, president of the prestigious Xaverian High School, come along side us in our development process. With his help we progressed from one fundraising event (our annual Gala) to several events, including two Legislative Breakfasts. We now have some timely connections with many elected officials who see the impact our programs are making and are anxious to support us.

The after school program is doing amazingly well. We have so many success stories, many of which you will have opportunity to read about in upcoming publications. Several students in our program who were at-risk in Junior High are now doing fabulous in High School and volunteering their free time back into our

program. Stephanie Garcia, one of five children in a struggling single parent home, just recently was accepted into the National Honor Society. She attributes her success to the support that Children of the City has given her and her family. We are pleased with the high attendance in our parent workshops that have been very successful in providing needed resources and encouragement to the families.

We are equally excited about the prospects of opening a Charter School in 2009 which will allow us to utilize the methods that have been so successful and take it to another level. It will increase the amount of children that we can service, increase our capacity for the after school and summer programs as well as increase the scope of the comprehensive services that Children of the City provides to the disadvantaged children of Sunset Park. All in all, a great year behind and an even greater year ahead.

Your support ensures our continued success as we work to build and improve upon our very innovative programs. Thank you for your help.

*joyce mattera*  
Executive Director

# Christmas: A season of givers

The holiday times were especially touching as many joined us in supporting families with food and gifts for the children. We had some wonderful individuals and organizations who participated in the collection of toys as well as 89 volunteers from all over the city and out of state who came out for one of our three consecutive days of gift wrapping.

On the eve of our Annual Christmas session, we welcomed a team of 44 volunteers from Ohio who joined our volunteer staff in visiting children in their homes. They were able to see firsthand the plight of many families and invite them out to our Christmas session. During the second night of gift wrapping we were short the quota of toys needed and Rocco Basile came through

at the last minute with toys he had rounded up from his friends and acquaintances. Also to the rescue was Forest City Ratner Companies and Toys for Tots.

There were over 400 children, ages 4-15 in attendance at our Annual Christmas session and helping us were 76 volunteers. The theme of the session was centered on the value and



worth of each child. Children learned that gifts are not just items purchased with money, but they themselves are gifts; their unique talents, abilities and time are gifts to the ones they love and to the world. Children were encouraged to forge ahead amidst their many

challenges; to believe in themselves and to make right choices that will positively affect their lives and their community.

At the end of this session, Christmas gifts were distributed to all in attendance.

While children were engaged in their activities, 65 parents attended the Parent Workshop where Nereyda Perez from State Farm shared her personal life story of the struggle to break free from poverty to earn business success today.



Parents had a time of Q&A with our staff. COC continues efforts to provide effective services, resources and referrals. We gave out additional gifts and groceries to 85 children enrolled in our Afterschool Program and about 150 children who came

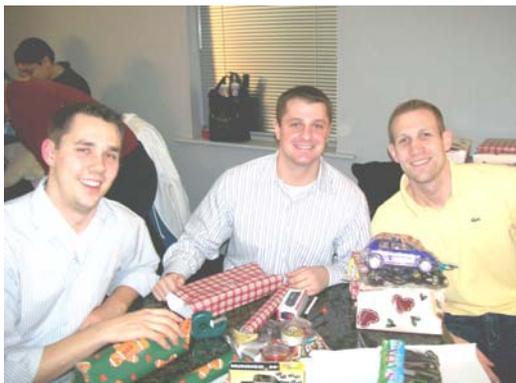


to our site throughout the rest of the week. All together, we were able to bring holiday cheer and a message of hope for the future to over 600 children and families. The following individuals, organizations and companies that orchestrated the collection of toys include:



- Brianna's Hair Salon
- Commerce Bank
- Community Board 7
- Forest City Ratner Companies
- Hampton Christian High School
- Rocco Basile
- St John's Bread and Life
- State Farm Insurance
- Toys for Tots

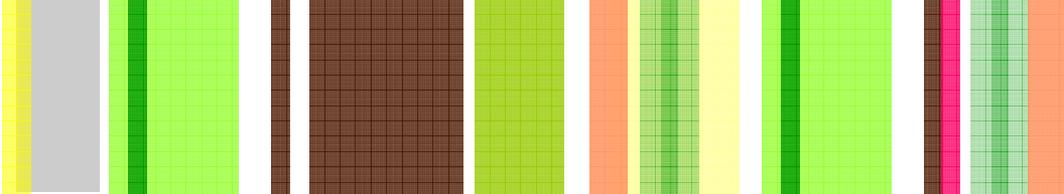
In addition, the following companies participated in one of our gift-wrapping events on Wednesday,



Thursday and Friday evening who not only donated their time gift-wrapping, but also brought toys with them:

- Baruch College
- Brooklyn Tech HS
- Church of Park Slope
- City of New York Human Resources Admin.
- Columbia University School of Public Health
- Gans Studio
- Good Shepherds
- Infinium Capital Management
- New York Cares
- New York City Housing Authority
- New York Stitch-n-Bitch
- Sheppel-FGI
- Old Navy
- Resurrection Church
- Ryan Center
- Sheppel-FGI





## Nayeli's Story

Her mom came into our office, sobbing almost uncontrollably. 'My daughter' she sobbed in Spanish 'refuses to listen, and is throwing a tantrum and will hurt herself.' Nayeli's mom was clearly besides herself, and didn't know where to turn.

Nayeli is a first grade ESL student direct from Ecuador and just recently united with her mother. At first, Nayeli didn't speak and was not sociable. Her Afterschool teacher reported that Nayeli didn't know her numbers or words in English. If she did speak it was to ask permission to use the bathroom. When her mother came in that afternoon, we immediately rushed to the rescue and connected the mother with our Parenting Workshops facilitator. They met several times and

Nayeli's mom learned how to deal more effectively with the challenges her daughter was facing. In the meantime, Nayeli's Afterschool teacher began to give her some one-on-one intervention. It wasn't long before the teacher reported that Nayeli became more active and sociable. She made friends that speak to her in Spanish and English and began to show motivation in learning.

The Afterschool teacher fondly recalls with such joy the first time Nayeli responded in English. 'She raised her hand confidently.' It was so encouraging to hear her and see how she is now feeling good about herself. To ensure this success remains consistent "I created a study sheet for our one on one time, writing out spelling & vocabulary words for us to go over" her teacher reports. As time progresses, Nayeli is blossoming in her studies and has grown to becoming a more confident student.

*gala*  
2008

Last year's Gala was a night to be remembered. We are anticipating another eventful and fun-filled evening this year to be held at the Tribeca Rooftop. We will once again be joined by **Steve Schirripa** of the HBO hit series *The Sopranos*, as our Master of Ceremonies, **Richard Jefferson** small forward of the New Jersey Nets, as well as many other celebrities and friends who support the hard efforts of Children of the City. We hope you will join us on March 13, 2008.

We welcome your donation either by mail or the web:

Children of the City  
740 40th Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11232  
[www.childrenofthecity.org](http://www.childrenofthecity.org)

## EVENT WATCH

**BENEFIT GALA:  
TRIBECA ROOFTOP**  
March 13

**SPRING/SUMMER  
GOLF OUTING**  
to be announced

**SUMMER CARNIVAL**  
June 14

**HAMPTONS DINNER**  
to be announced

