

Word on the Street

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Here's Life Inner City in New York City

Matt and Anna Shenk

Lift Up America on September 12, 2006



Anna's team welcomed and registered ministries and directed traffic for the event.



A young girl sits with her mother as she is fitted for hearing aids.



A young girl smiles as she models her new glasses.

September 12th was a big day here in New York City! On a large pier on the Hudson River, Here's Life Inner City coordinated one of the biggest service days to urban ministries that the city has ever seen. "Lift Up America," a nationwide effort that kicked-off in NYC, brought together corporate leaders from Tyson, LensCrafters and Starkey Hearing Aids as well as sports figures and the U.S. Navy. Through the event:

100 NYC churches and ministries that serve the poor received:

- 35,000 pounds of frozen Tyson chicken
- 9,000 half-gallons of Minute Maid orange juice
- 80,000 pounds of food, paper products and toiletries

600 NYC children received:

- Backpacks filled with school supplies
- Books
- Baseballs and other toys

123 people received free Starkey hearing tests

- 77 received free hearing aids

250 kids received free LensCrafters eye exams

- 170 received the glasses they needed

In addition, several hundred children toured the Navy's USS San Antonio and heard an inspirational message from the ship's Commander, Brad Lee. Recently featured in *Ebony* magazine, Commander Lee grew up in the inner-city and now serves as an amazing African-American role model for our city's youth.

Why is all this so important? The donated food enabled Here's Life Inner City to build relationships with new ministries and helped strengthen existing ones. But perhaps the most exciting aspect of this is the transformation of young lives through the receipt of glasses and hearing aids. Imagine the impact of being able to see the chalkboard clearly or hear your teacher at school! Turn over to the back to read about the impact a hearing aid had on Shy-anne.

Events like these are a lot of work. Matt was busy for weeks, coordinate logistics and set-up for an event with over 700 people. Anna was busy working in the warehouse to inventory and prepare supplies. But in the end, it was all worth it!

Shy-Anne, a beautiful Hispanic girl, is nine years-old and is one of the recipients of hearing aids. Her school in Brooklyn was contacted by Metro Ministries, a Here's Life partner church, about the upcoming free hearing tests. The next Sunday, Shy-Anne's mother, Cindy, brought her to the church along with her other two daughters.

Cindy explained how Shy-Anne had lost most of her hearing when she was only nine months-old, as a side effect of immunization. As a result, the girl does not speak much and has grown accustomed to using sign language. Shy-Anne had hearing aids for a while but they were destroyed in a house fire. To make matters worse, her father died a few years ago, so life has not been easy for this family.

When Shy-Anne and her mom arrived at the event, Cindy was overcome by emotion. Receiving a new set of hearing aids was a second chance for her daughter, much like the grace of God. While Shy-anne will continue to be substantially deaf, her hearing aids have given her new life and new hope. Not only is she able to hear the voices of her family and loved ones, she is also able to hear the police sirens, fire trucks and ambulances that a child needs to hear to stay safe in the city.

Praise and Prayer

- Praise God for a great start to the after-school program and GED program at our church! We'll provide you with a full update on these activities next month.
- Pray for healing for Matt as he is experiencing Bells Palsy on the right side of his face. The doctors say this should clear up in 6-8 weeks, but it's certainly frustrating to have the muscles on one side of his face paralyzed.
- **Overwhelmed!** Please continue to pray for this transitional period in our lives. We're learning that there are many more needs that need to be met than there is time in the day for us to meet them all. We're learning that we have a hard time saying "no," and we also realize that we have to be better at seeking wisdom from God on how to best juggle the many areas of ministry that we both are involved in.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support! We are constantly reminded of how thankful we are that folks are interceding on our behalf as we seek to serve the Lord. You mean a great deal to us!

In Him,

Matt and Anna Shenk • 932 St. Marks Ave. #3E, Brooklyn, NY 11213
Anna (347) 276-4419 or annashenk@yahoo.com • Matt (646) 287-4197 or mattshenk@yahoo.com
Please make checks payable to Campus Crusade for Christ, account #0572439
www.theshenks.org