

The Gem Project is set to Change the Dynamics of Education, While Giving Back in a Monumental Way

Newark, NJ May 19, 2010 The Gem Project (TGP) has marked an evening of celebration for all of its achievements, since it was founded in 2006. It is also a time to acknowledge the accomplishments of other budding nonprofit organizations, local small businesses, and selected youth within New Jersey and New York. The event will take place at Newark Public Library from 5:30-8:00 PM in the 4th fl Auditorium. Representatives and executive directors of organizations such as Mentoring USA, Greater Newark Cares, Cry Out, Pulse NJ, West-Ward Collective, The Guardian Fellowship, Timberland (Manhattan Branch), Brown 70 Films, DMAS Integrated Systems, D'sEyeZ Productions, President of Georgia King Village Council, Mary Grace Oania Photography, Kinspin Photography, Sims Anderson, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity and several other organizations and businesses have all confirmed their attendance.

The speakers include Victoria Virgo- Miss New Jersey USA 2010 NAM, Crystal Dodson-Fitness Instructor and Nutrition-Health expert, and Amanda A. Ebokosia - Founder of The Gem Project and published author of Raindrops for Life. Attendees will first be welcomed by a viewing of "The Gem Project & Young People for Change," a documentary film that was directed by the late Chas Johnson—who worked in Productions at John Cotton Dana Library, at Rutgers University-Newark. Two years ago Johnson volunteered his services, to assist Ebokosia on developing a documentary film about The Gem Project and inspirational youth within the community. Johnson passed away shortly after the filming the start of January 2009. This is the first time the film is being released. Dondy Desir of D'sEyeZ Productions has been working on the editing of the film for this event. Desir is also a young person for change, being a graduate of Hofstra University of the Audio/Video/Film program, she has already worked with major networks like BET, MTV Networks, NY1 News, and NBC. It is through her that Johnson's memory will live on. Guests on the film include Ashley Giddings, Jason Khurdan, Brittany S. Hale, and Lianna De Pinto who are all founding members of The Gem Project, Inc.

The special segment of the film, Young People for Change, introduced students Yetunde Odugbesan and Valerie Mitchell. They were accompanied by Bashirah Brown, Breast Cancer survivor and women's health advocate at age 24. The Gem Project's mission is to educate the youth of our nation, of various issues that affect them and their community, through use of our innovative programs and enriching activities.

The Gem Project celebration comes with no surprise as they have successfully launched an interactive literacy program, in select cities and townships of New Jersey. They're currently working on a location in New York City. The interactive literacy program is just one of the 9 programs and 9 divisions that The Gem Project offers for our youth. Their demographic extends from ages 3 to 22.

They have been successful in their awareness luncheons, benefit photo shoots, circulating awareness showcase displays, community organizer academy, college campus walks, annual galas, PSAs, and ongoing Autism Quilt.

The Autism Quilt program is a project that was c/o founded by The Gem Project and The Guardian Fellowship. The Guardian Fellowship is a nonprofit organization that mentors youth within the city of Newark. Currently, The Gem Project runs the Autism Quilt Program every 4th week. During the event, The Gem Project will be rewarding two selected New Jersey schools.

Awardees include:

Alicia Smith - an award-winning choreographer, performer, master instructor, and member of the New Jersey *Tap Dance* Ensemble.

Terrell Perkins – NYC film maker and cartoonist of *STOOP*, which will release later this summer. Perkins is also creative development director of The Gem Project, Inc.

Capri Lewis – Business owner of N-DOWD; and volunteer of youth programs at The Gem Project, Inc.

Olumayowa “Godsent” Okubanjo – Spoken word artist and founder of Cry Out Ink, a faith based organization that encourages self-expression through poetry and music.

There are currently over 50 awardees who are either founding members, local organizations, and small businesses that will be awarded at the event.

ABOUT AMANDA EBOKOSIA

Ebokosia has authored and published many works since age 14. Her first publication was with a poem entitled, *New Chapter*. It was published in the anthology, *Journeys*, by Editors Sharon Derdian and Micheal Perala. It was published by Iliad Press. These achievements were shortly followed up with her performances at the legendary Apollo Theater and the self-publication of her book, *"Raindrops of Life"* at age 19. Ebokosia founded The Gem Project during her sophomore year at Rutgers University (Newark Campus). She received her bachelor's degree in Biology with a minor in Psychology in 2008. She has since developed 9 successful programs and 9 divisions for her nonprofit, which is in its expansion phase. She attributes her success of TGP to her faith in the Lord, family, friends, and the dedicated members of her organization.

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