



# REAL NEWS

SHAW COMMUNITY CENTER

November 2022



## 'REAL NEWS' SUMMER CAMP 2022

SHAW COMMUNITY CENTER'S RENOWNED SUMMER CAMP WAS BETTER THAN EVER.

Attendance exceeded pre-pandemic levels with the number of campers averaging 77 daily, 10 middle and high school youth participating in the media internship program and 10 youth working as staff or aides. Half of the participants were new to the Center!

Story continues on page 4 →



**GIVING  
TUESDAY**

Mark your calendar! Tuesday, **November 29, 2022** is this year's day of giving. Help Shaw Community Center reach its goal of **\$50,000** for programming costs.

[www.shawcommunity.org](http://www.shawcommunity.org)

Mission: To enhance the lives and expand the opportunities of Shaw residents

# Jazz in June

The beautiful rooftop terrace of the Room & Board furniture gallery overlooking the Shaw neighborhood was the perfect setting for a “friendraising” event to raise awareness about what Shaw Community Center does and why it matters. The Center was honored to have so many civic, community and business leaders committed to lifting up BIPOC youth in attendance.

Executive Director Sudi West and youth participants provided a powerful look into the Center’s positive impact.

Special Counsel Seema Gajwani from the DC Office of the Attorney General, drove home the critical role that community-based organizations like the Center play in giving youth both opportunities to excel and alternatives to risky behavior.

AG Karl Racine, who spoke virtually, acknowledged the Center’s important work and Ward 2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto spoke of her commitment to providing funding for the type of out-of-school time and violence interruption work the Center does.



**Special Counsel Gajwani**



**ED West with youth**



**Councilmember Pinto**



# Jazz in June

Electric Soul musician Sitali provided the jazz and What the Chef provided the delicious fare.

The event was a success in every way, as it both raised the Center's profile in the community and engendered new relationships between the Center and potential partners. The Center thanks all who made it possible, including Room & Board for donating the venue, Ms. Gajawani and Councilmember Pinto for taking time out of their busy schedules to speak at the event, and Attorney General Racine for his support.



Sitali



## COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



Awards for the most improved student, citizenship, and academic achievement were among those given to SCC students at the ceremony held at the end of the school year. **Kassidy**, most improved, started off shy and uncertain, but was excelling by the end of the first semester. **Jovon** and **Frankie** received Trailblazer awards for their media intern work.



# “Real News” Summer Camp 2022

The Center’s renowned summer camp was better than ever.

Attendance exceeded pre-pandemic levels with the number of campers averaging 77 daily, 10 middle and high school youth participating in the media internship program and 10 youth working as staff or aides. Half of the participants were new to the Center!

Campers worked together in their assigned “houses” to complete challenges and earn points that they could use at the Shaw store.

The system taught campers how valuable collaboration and teamwork is to accomplishing a goal.



## Academic Enrichment

Literacy and numeracy enrichment with Top Scholars; computer literacy and coding with BecauseIcan; chess with Mr. Pete; weekly journaling.

## Art

Painting in the style of Alexander Calder; tie dying t-shirts; shaving cream printing; hot and cold colors.

## Life Skills

Gardening with Passion City friends, MK, Alex, Sarah, and Clara; nutrition with Chef G and Miss Rita; financial literacy; shoe-tying.





# Real News" Summer Camp 2022

(continued...)

## Weekly Workshops

Self-defense/boxing with Mike Easton; reenactment by Marquett Milton, Historic Interpreter from the AACWM; public speaking coaching with author/parent entrepreneur Miss Friday; Capoeira with Maestro Kojo Johnson; history of telecommunications with Mr. Greg and Miss Rita.

## Weekly Field Trips

Cameron Run Regional Park; SplashDown Waterpark; Pirate's Cove Water Park; pirate cove, Massanutten Waterpark; National Geographic King Tut Exhibit.

## Other Physical Fitness

Outdoor games with Coaches Howard and Hinton; basketball tournament (the media interns beat the staff!); MALS team circuit training.



**See the Summer Camp Montage 2022 and the Power of Shaw videos produced by our Real News Media Interns at [www.shawcommunity.com](http://www.shawcommunity.com) (scroll down the home page).**

# SCC STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## KHADIJAH HUGGINS, HOSPITALITY MANAGER



Khadijah Huggins is a fixture at Shaw Community Center. She began working with us in 2012 when the Center was located on 7th Street and two of her children, Robbie and Arykah, were in the program. Many people know who Khadijah is, but they don't know the extent of her commitment to the Center and youth.

Khadijah is what might be called a “hospitality manager” in some places. She ensures that the food served at the Center is not only tasty, but also nutritious and that it is served on time.

Every weekday between 10am and noon, Khadijah welcomes the DC Central Kitchen meal delivery. Unlike some, she praises the DCK food as fresh and healthy. She acknowledges that others might not agree with her opinion, but she doesn't back down. (She KNOWS Oodles of Noodles are not a healthy choice!) To make the meals more palatable to our youth who are quite deliberate in their food choices, she lovingly adds seasonings and toppings, and makes sure the presentation is just right.

Khadijah also makes sure that the Center is clean and welcoming. She is sort of like the fairytale elves who make shoes at night. She cleans with such ferocious energy after hours – in the kitchen, bathrooms and program space – that the youth are nearly blinded by the brightness of the space on a daily basis. Yet they never see that she is the one doing it!

During the pandemic, Khadijah intensified her efforts in order to meet required COVID protocols while the Center was hosting childcare for essential workers. She also repackaged the DCK food deliveries, and organized distribution of meals to Lincoln Westmoreland II residents so that the food didn't go to waste and so that dozens of families had healthy meals each week.

But Khadijah is more than a hospitality manager and her tenacious attitude doesn't end at the Center. She has raised three children almost entirely on her own, guiding Arykah – an SCC financial assistance award recipient – through the college application process. Arykah is now a sophomore at Tennessee State University.

Deferring her own education to raise her children, earlier this fall Khadijah finally finished the coursework required for her high school diploma. She is now in the process of applying for college for herself! Congratulations Khadijah! The entire Shaw Community Center is proud of you and thanks you for all you do for us!



## NEWS FROM MICHELLE YOUNG



**Lizar and his big sister Lyzara**

**Michelle sends us this adorable pic of her new baby boy, Lizar Young.**

Baby boy Lizar Young came into the world on July 2, 2022, weighing a healthy 7 pounds, 6 ounces. Mother Michelle is a program assistant at the Center, and older sisters Luvayah, Luniyah and Lyzara are delighted to have a baby brother to love and spoil. Luvayah and Luniyah are looking forward to having Lyzara and Lizar follow in their footsteps at the Center.

## Board Member and Community Activist Kiah Lewis Produces Documentary

Twelve at-risk youth in Washington DC showcased their documentary “Soaring Through Trauma” on September 30, 2022, at Busboy and Poets Anacostia. The documentary tells their personal stories of how gun violence has impacted their lives in hopes to inspire change in the District. Kiah Lewis was the film producer and coordinator for the project.

The youth are a part of S.O.A.R project DC, a non-profit gun violence prevention program. S.O.A.R project was awarded a grant through Mayor Muriel Bowser's building blocks initiative to work with youth to produce a multimedia project.

In just 4 weeks, the youth were trained in multimedia skills by a media professional and worked together to produce the documentary.

"Soaring Through Trauma" highlights teens from southeast DC who want to make a difference and be a part of the solution.

S.O.A.R Project will host their second screening of the documentary at the Avalon Theatre in NW DC (Date/Time TBA).



# A New School Year

New Beginnings, Challenges and Adventures

Each new school year is an opportunity for new beginnings: a clean slate to write your own story.

It also has challenges, and with data showing “a substantial decline in reading and math proficiency, and the widening of an already troubling achievement gap,” (DCist, 9/2/22), the Center’s staff is prepared to meet the challenges head-on through homework help and continuation of the enrichment programs that have been so effective in the past.

One new and exciting adventure designed to encourage student achievement: a foray into academic enrichment through the Metaverse! The Center is engaging the HipHop Game team (Tyrone Norris) to help us start this project. Look for updates in future newsletters!

BACK TO  
SCHOOL



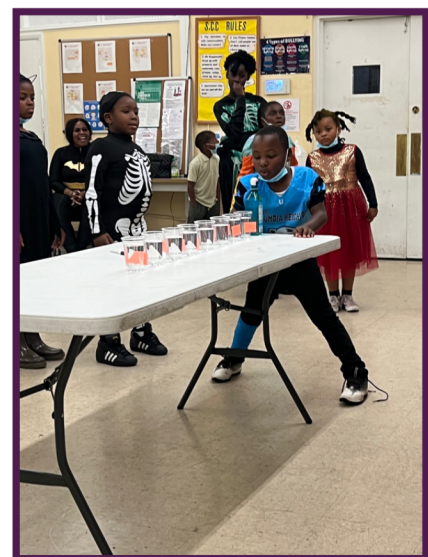
## Harvest Festival



The Harvest Festival was once again a hugely successful event, with a large turnout of youth and families. Everyone was excited to be in their costumes and participate in the games and challenges that earned house points.



**Youth square off for a team challenge**



**Games requiring skill and dexterity**



# #GivingTuesday Campaign

Shaw Community Center is once again participating in #GivingTuesday, the global day of giving started in 2012 as a logical follow-up to Black Friday and Cyber Monday: a day that inspires people to give, collaborate and celebrate generosity after days of consumerism. Mark your calendar for November 29, this year's day of giving.

We are once again hoping to raise \$50,000, with proceeds going to general operating support. While many of SCC's direct program costs in this year's budget are covered by grants, many are not, including \$18,000 for program supplies, \$20,000 in scholarships, \$5,000 in Youth Workforce stipends, \$15,000 for field trips and \$6,000 for special event costs. We also need to keep the lights on and a roof over our heads.



We need support from generous people like you to keep our program going – especially with the high inflation rate. Youth and families in the Shaw community depend on Shaw, not only for the services and programs it delivers, but also for the anchor it provides in a rapidly-changing neighborhood. Please consider giving a significant one-time gift or a recurring gift to help us.

## There are two ways to donate:

Through the Giving Tuesday button on our website, [www.shawcommunity.org](http://www.shawcommunity.org) (note that we now can take gifts of stock and cryptocurrency); or

## By sending a check to:

Shaw Community Center  
1701 11th St. NW,  
Washington, DC, 20001

Please write "Giving Tuesday" in the memo line.

**THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!**

## Angel Tree Giving

One of our most popular community events has been our holiday celebration at which families gather for a wonderful home-cooked meal, activities and entertainment, and SCC distributes Christmas gifts to 100 youth through our Angel Tree Giving program.



Coordinated by Program Director Melissa Laws, Angel Tree Giving helps ensure that our youth and families have what they need to celebrate the holidays together. We will be partnering with local United Church of Christ congregations to collect gifts and money. Once congregations have opted-in, Melissa Laws asks youth to put together their wish lists. For those wishes not filled by congregation members, Melissa will shop locally or online for gifts with a \$50 per youth budget.

SCC is seeking an additional \$2000 to supplement the children's gifts contributed by the churches and give each family a grocery gift card. If you would like to donate to this drive, please either do so through our website, [www.shawcommunity.org](http://www.shawcommunity.org), or send a check to SCC at 1701 11st Street NW, Washington DC 20001 with "Angel Tree Giving" in the memo line. Donations are needed by **December 12, 2022**.

## Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support SCC every time you shop on Amazon. Go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) (its own URL, not regular Amazon.com) and select Shaw Community Ministry, Inc. (our name in IRS records) as your charity. Every eligible purchase you make through AmazonSmile thereafter will result in a donation to SCC of 0.5% of the purchase price.





# Art All Night 2022: “Changing the Game”

SCC’s Lee on 11th “Changing the Game” program at Art All Night, was a transformative experience for the 1,447 who attended in person, 200+ who participated on the Metaverse, and 300+ on social media.

The Washington Jazz Arts Institute youth ensemble wooed the crowd with their dulcet notes and documentary about their musical journeys, *In Our Words*. WJAI founder, artistic director and jazz hall of famer Davey Yarborough spoke about the institute’s impact on youth in the city.

The Ladies of Shaw Fashion Show, featuring fashions created by Shaw youth and staff, brought down the house with a step formation choreographed by dance instructor Iesha Washington (a former SCC student).

Headlining the main stage was DC’s iconic Black Alley Band, whose genre-crossing music is self-described as a “soul garage.” The dance party that erupted was cathartic, with the crowd shedding the trauma of the pandemic, poverty, racism and gun violence, if only fleetingly.



The Ladies of Shaw





# Art All Night 2022: "Changing the Game"

(continued...)

The crowd was treated to the performance art of the C3W professional wrestling league. Richie Blanco (aka SCC's own Ronte Hinton) and his crew the Street Stompers made their C3W debut, holding their own against seasoned pros.

Nineteen-year-old professional boxer Jalil Hackett, boxing since he was eight, spoke about boxing, mental health and gun violence. Guns down, hands up!

Event-goers were able to play in the Metaverse, in a game truck complete with Xboxes, PlayStations and 3D cameras, and on a 360 photo booth. Food and libations were provided by community vendors.

Electric soul musician, Sitali, entranced us with selections from his new album, *The Great Year*, and our own Melissa Laws reprised *Brother, Your Life*.



**The Street Stompers  
in the ring**



**Jalil Hackett**



## Thank you!

SCC's "Changing the Game" event at Art All Night would not have been possible without the generous support of:

- The DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, and Events DC who funded the event
- Mayor Muriel Bowser, Deputy Mayor John Falcicchio and Alex Padro of Shaw Main Streets who facilitated the street closure
- Metropolitan Police Department's 3rd District and Shawn Burgess who provided security
- Tyrone Norris (aka Mental Stamina) who invited us onto his virtual property so we could stream all over the world
- Events 1985 who provided the game truck, the 360 photo booth and concessions



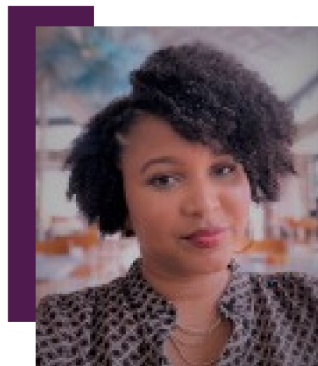
# SCC BOARD

## WELCOME AND FAREWELLS •

Last month the SCC Board of Directors welcomed five new members into its ranks, increasing the total number of board members to nine in accordance with a board development plan established in 2021.

The new members are: **Estephany Brito-Carlo**, who brings experience in immigration rights, equity and inclusion, organizational change facilitation and budget management to the table; **Dan Davis**, who is the Chief Student Advocate for the DC Office of the Student Advocate and who for nearly a decade supported youth and families at Sasha Bruce Youthwork, Inc.; **Kiah Lewis**, who is a four-time recipient of the SCC college scholarship and brings a wealth of media and communications expertise to her work on the board; **Monty Vallabhapuram**, who is a corporate strategy specialist in the private sector with experience in finance, human resources and strategic planning; and **Tarketa Williams**, who is a program manager for the DC Department of Corrections where she oversees three male education units, building on nearly 17 years of work with at-risk youth.

We are honored and grateful that these passionate people have committed their time and talent to the Shaw Community Center. We look forward to continuing the Center's good work together!



**Estephany Brito-Carlo**



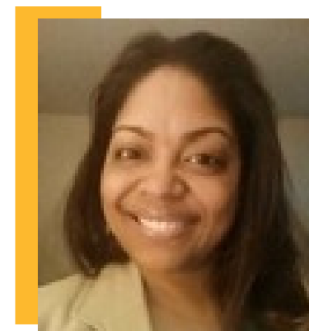
**Dan Davis**



**Kiah Lewis**



**Monty Vallabhapuram**



**Tarketa Williams**

# SCC BOARD

## WELCOME AND FAREWELLS •

*(continued...)*

At the same time, the board bid farewell to three long-standing and committed board members: Marjorie Hoffman, who served on the board for twelve years including seven years as Chair and six as Treasurer; Addie Lewis, who served as the community representative for four years; and Dale Ostrander, who served as staff liaison for four years. All three also volunteered in the afterschool program. We thank them all for their time, counsel and compassion, and wish them Godspeed on their next adventures!



**Addie Lewis**



**Dale Ostrander**



**Marjorie Hoffman**

## **SCC Receives Two-Year Grant for Economic Mobility Project**

We are honored and grateful that the Greater Washington Community Foundation has selected Shaw Community Center for a generous grant through the Health Equity Fund.

The grant will help the Center implement a Social Good Community Reinvestment project to engage youth and community members in workshops and mentorships that focus on increasing economic mobility.

Increasing economic mobility among community members makes it possible to not only narrow the racial wealth gap, but also address the social and economic disparities in health outcomes.

None of the Center's good work would be possible without the tremendous support from organizations like the Greater Washington Community Foundation and numerous government agencies, private foundations, and institutional and individual donors. Please know that we are immensely grateful for your generosity.



## Executive Director's Corner

# Akwaba! Shaw-Gogo Cultural Exchange

by Sudi West, Executive Director

Akwaba!

One of SCC's greatest leaps in program development this year comes through our partnership with the Black Alley Gogo band. They were an instant hit with our community when they headlined ArtAllNight this September, producing joyful faces that we've not seen in years!!

They welcomed some of our young people to join them on stage, inducing an infectious catharsis of feet-beating and call-and-response that spread through the crowd, and a palpable vibe of shared experience throughout the community since then. It was a promising example of the power of Gogo for interactive place-keeping for Washingtonians.

Some of us joined the band on a birthright journey in October, traveling to Ghana where we visited the capital, Accra, the Cape Coast castles with their 'Doors of No Return,' and the rural village of Nyame Bekyere. What we found were strong networks of Black-Americans and Africans welcoming us to join them, grateful for the fresh infusion of our DC-born culture, and pointing out familiar faces at every level of attainment in Ghanaian society.

The primary purpose of the trip was to seek partners for our MALs and Real News Media Internship programs that are designed to expand opportunities for 12-26 year-old youth in Shaw. The idea builds on basic pattern disruption; for young people to be able to travel outside of the US and leave immediate influences behind while engaging in a very different set of possibilities.

We, in fact, met some young men who relocated in response to critical challenges in the DC area, and who are willing to serve as credible mentors by sharing their experience and accomplishments with our young people in Shaw.



**Transplanted DC youth, Jabulani.**

One transplanted DC youth, Jabulani, works full time as a producer and media manager, and covered Black Ally's musical tour while we were there. He chatted with me one day as he landed and stowed an aerial camera drone, and reflected on some of the advantages to living in Ghana:

"People [are] so worried about what it's like out here, but socially it's actually better. I'm connecting with different people my age, they love my swag, and guess what? There are no guns. Also... the exchange rate is almost 13 to 1 [Ghananian Cedes to US Dollars]. I had, like, \$200 saved up from my summer job check back in DC.

So, as soon as I touched down, I was already up! I had a little money in my pocket, and then started earning from my media job, doing basic Instagram influencer and production stuff we really take for granted back home."

Needless to say, this young man's enthusiasm was one of the highlights of our trip, and we look forward to connecting him in conversations where his peers from DC and Shaw's Real News Internship can follow in his footsteps.



**ED West and Gina Paige, African Ancestry founder**



**Black Alley performs at the chieftain's enstoolment for DC's own Diallo Sumbry and dedication of the Nyame Bekyere Community Center.**