

All About Us Day Camp's Second Annual Basketball Game

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY SHANNON HOLLOWAY



The beginnings of All About Us Day Camp were quite simple, as most are, with the recognition of a community need in the presence of those with the willingness to do something immediate to help compensate for a structural flaw. The camp's founder, Annette Kenner, says, "With both parents having to work, their kids are left alone, and that's not good; kids need an outlet for all their energy."

On July 17, in the summer of 2008, four children: Lamont Kenner (Annette's grandson), Lucky Fleemster, Rashad Hawkins and Deven Herbert were bored. The elementary school playground was closed, so was the Boys and Girls Club, and the kids left to their own devices realized they had nowhere to go. Finding this idea unacceptable, Annette decided to start All About Us Day Camp. Since that first day, the camp has grown from four children to 16 and up to 50 taking these kids from boredom to practicing fractions, cursive writing, reading, spelling comprehension, playing double-dutch, having water balloon fights, going on trips to Six

Flags, playing golf, and visiting local museums. Their entire worlds have been bettered.

"The children are my focus," Annette says as she endearingly calls each child her grandkid. She has grown up here and literally knows almost everyone in her community, pointing out person after person who has lived here since they were also children; and many of whom, including her, now have their children and grandchildren in tow.

Annette says, "I make it my business to get to know everyone around the block and schools. We grew up together, and now we've come back [together]." Annette started volunteering her help during events for Turning the Page, an organization at Payne Elementary. She also makes trips for the seniors in her community during the heat of the day and shares All About Us Day Camp event food and beverages with them at no cost. Yet Annette is quick to realize that she could not do any of the work that she has without the countless community members who go above and beyond to get her what the kids need.

The turnout for All About Us

Day Camp's Second Annual Basketball Game, held June 26 on the Payne Elementary playground, was great. Around 1 p.m., there were already children, adults, parents and community members who have shown up to participate in the day's activities, raise some money, support the cause and the kids, and of course, watch the camp's basketball games.

Annette's sister, Karen Hicks, and daughter, Latoya Eccles, were on hand to help run the event. Julie McMillan, a Payne Elementary Ward 7 partner from Turning the Page was there to help and hang out with the kids. Community member Roscoe Grant was on hand and volunteered to cook. Annette's "backbone," community friend and donor, Jerry May, not only donated the burgers, hot dogs, beverages and buns for event so that the camp could raise funds for more trips, but he also helped to document the game by photographing.

Annette says Jerry's kindness, as those of the many others who have come out on this day, begins with their belief in her and what she is doing for these kids. In return for her



CLOCKWISE from TOP

1. Will the ball go the distance?
2. Newbie Trevon Williams joins founder Annette Kenner and two of the original four boys.
3. Kids and adults alike take to the court!



leadership role and positive influence, the community members are always there for her, for the kids, getting involved in the community themselves, and with a strong sense of community. No one is complaining that they are left with idle time on their hands.

For more information about the camp, e-mail allaboutusdaycamp@gmail.com. Shannon Holloway is a local artist living in the District. You may reach her via e-mail at holloway.shannon@gmail.com. ★