



Spring 2014

## Aslan Youth Ministries Newsletter



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#### **Volunteer Highlight:**

Brandon Mui shares his experience serving on our team as a High School tutor.

#### **A Sad Farewell:**

It's with great fondness we say goodbye to John & Leneita Fix

## Snow, Snow & More Snow

Aren't we all tired of cold, wind and snow here in New Jersey? We are looking towards Spring with its warmer weather, flowers and Easter.

This winter Aslan celebrated it's 38<sup>th</sup> Christmas as an organization. We had a wonderful time in Red Bank, Long Branch and Asbury Park filled with clowns, good food, gifts and, of course, remembering the birth of our Savior.

We are grateful to everyone who helped make our Christmas a "success." There are so many who donate presents, cook food, bring groceries, organize and run our parties. Each holiday season we are overwhelmed by the generosity of so many who give so much. Thank you!



## Brandon Mui:

### On The Aslan Team

I started my volunteering duties as a summer camp counselor with Aslan Youth Ministries entering into my senior year in high school. In choosing Aslan, my goal is to devote my own efforts in helping underprivileged children as a way to give back to my community. Little did I realize at the time the important impact my experience at Aslan would have on me.

As camp counselor, I decided that I could make a potential lasting impact for these underprivileged youngsters in addressing their tendency to underachieve in academics. I wanted to instill in them the power and value of knowledge, while making sure to show them that there could be fun in learning (it is a summer camp after all). I devised and taught them easy, but often practical, scientific lessons and experiments with the hope of stimulating their interest in science.

My gratifying summer experience induced me to pursue even more volunteering activities with Aslan in the fall, this time as a private tutor. Immediately, I began to obsess over the best pedagogic approach to teaching children, thinking that it will be the key to success in my assignment. That idea proved to be far too simplistic upon meeting my tutee, as his difficult upbringing has hardened him into an extreme introvert. In the beginning, I had trouble getting through to him. Sometimes he would just curl up and ignore my instructions. I decided then that I needed to serve the dual role of mentor and tutor and make every effort to gain his trust by showing genuine compassion towards him regarding his difficult childhood. Despite the seemingly bleak situation at the present, I encouraged him to strive for success in the future. Within a few weeks, our relationship started to change, with him looking up to me as a “big brother”. He started to heed my advice, and



with a fresh attitude and outlook, we worked diligently together towards improving his learning skills as a team. Soon thereafter, not only did he improve his academic skills, we also became close companions.

More than his academic improvement, I am especially encouraged by his fresh attitude towards the future, one that is filled with hope and a desire to succeed. My tutoring experience, gratifying as it is, also has profound impact on me. Deeply struck by the detrimental effects a broken family can impose on a child, I began to appreciate the immense value of a caring family in shaping his/her development, and came to the realization that it is not the materialistic or financial resources, but the intangibles, such as loving care, support, and guidance, that are most crucial for the proper upbringing of a child.

As I quickly learned in my tutee's case, mentorship is more valuable than tutorship. To truly help such children improve their academic levels, it is not sufficient to just throw more money into our educational system; we need to make personal commitments and efforts in mentoring them as a society. I am blessed with a loving and supportive family, and committed in my desire to provide my future children with the same nurturing environment. My rewarding tutoring experience not only solidifies my conviction to lend my service to children with such deprived backgrounds now, but also in the future.

# A Sad Farewell

Every once in a while someone comes along that truly defines what friendship is about. John & Leneita Fix are two of those very special people. Leneita first walked into our office in 1995 and worked for Aslan for the next 10 years. John then served as our Operations Officer for 5 years before Leneita and he moved to Florida in 2004.

Our friendship together goes way beyond their enormous value to our work with the kids. The work we do at Aslan is difficult. There are tremendous rewards when a child fights his way out and overcomes tremendous obstacles. But it's easy to be ground down by the overwhelming

John & Leneita: NJ Marathon



problems of so many children. John, Leneita and we have been through so much together – working shoulder-to-shoulder in the trenches of this ministry of “urban warfare.”

We could not have been happier, when the Fixes rejoined us in 2012. They brought a whole new level of skills and gifts to us, and they've contributed far more than these few words on paper can express. However, we have to say goodbye to them yet again. Since moving back to New Jersey, Leneita's parents

have both continued to have serious health problems. As their only surviving child, Leneita has realized there is no way she and John can adequately address these problems over the 1,800 miles from New Jersey to Florida.

It is, therefore, with a good deal of regret and sadness that we lose them again. We ask for you to please pray for Leneita, John and their three wonderful children in their long move south, where we know God will continue to bless and use them in amazing ways. And please continue to pray for Aslan Youth Ministries, for we know that God will continue to bless us as we carry on our critically important work without them. The Fixes will forever be in our hearts, and we know we will be in theirs as well.

Leneita & her girls



Beauty & The Beach

Lynn Ann & John: Island Nights



## Thank You LB&TD Foundation!

Aslan would not be able to continue our efforts without the financial help of so many. Thank you to the LB&TD Foundation for their \$25,000 grant to keep our programs moving forward!



## Haiti Update

Our efforts in L'Acajou continue to progress. In the coming months we will finalize the installation of our medical units with electricity and plumbing. It is exciting, as these units become closer and closer to being fully utilized. We are thankful for our partnership with Step Of Faith Ministries who support our work in Haiti in multiple ways. Pictured left are some of Aslan's 200 children in Haiti!

## Winter Is Perfect For Programs

Students in our *Right Choices* classes have spent this winter learning how much Christ loves them and what this means. Our goal this year from our youngest to oldest student has been to help students learn how a relationship with the Lord changes us. One student said to us recently, "I am learning to be less angry this year." That makes it all worth it.



## Did You Know?

**87%**

Of our tutoring students have shown an increase in their reading comprehension skills.

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**200**

Children and their families received gifts and food from individuals, churches and organizations both locally and nationwide

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**30**

Children are participating in a volunteer led Karate Class on Saturdays

## Become Part Of The Team

"Can you use anyone?" is a question we are asked often. The answer is always YES! Aslan can always use help in so many ways. There are weekly needs in our Bible Class and Tutoring programs. Annually we can use lots of hands at a number of our parties and our many events. In "the summers it takes dozens of people to provide lunches, programming and counselors in our day camps. If you want to jump in, get in touch with our volunteer coordinator Janis Marler at [janis@aslanyouth.org](mailto:janis@aslanyouth.org).

