



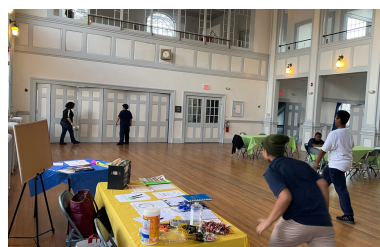
N O V - D E C 2 0 2 3

V O L U M E 1 5 , I S S U E 6

Restore now has three after-school sites in Elizabeth that result from our partnership with two Elizabethport communities. One of these communities, Elizabethport Presbyterian Center, has been a partner for fifteen-plus years, and now Restore is part of its Wednesday after-school program. Restore's newly hired Antoine Nelson works at this new site. In addition to EPC, Antoine is working with Ximena, Restore's Program Director, in the midtown section on Mondays, virtually on Tuesdays, and at another location in the Elizabethport neighborhood on Thursdays. This expansion has the potential to extend Restore's impact and outreach within the city of Elizabeth while also increasing its membership.

It hasn't been easy recovering from COVID. Our struggles have included redirecting our limited funding and finding new donors, which has allowed Restore to hire new, much-needed staff. On the other hand, each gain has created some unexpected setbacks. For example, our former site, which is no longer available, was so perfect for Restore. Although the new space is great, our meetings at this location are restricted to once weekly. An additional setback includes reduced student involvement. Specifically, students who used to be involved are not coming anymore; some are now high school graduates, some are employed part-time, while others found different interests during COVID. Other challenges include that new visitors at Restore, at times, aren't always sure what to do --- or if they belong. Additionally, not only are volunteers in short in supply, but some of those who are current, are exhausted and burned out. It's also been so hard to find youth workers. Over all, the general sentiment seems to be that the world doesn't look or sound safe. Not one of our lives is the same.

There never was or will be a "return to normal" ...constant interruptions in personal, ministry, and civic life leaves many of us tired and some of us burned out. Yet, a post-COVID world requires that pandemic sequelae neither define who we are nor what we do. Instead, relationships continue to be the key that brings children and teenagers to Restore meetings. As Restore looks forward, we strive to connect with children and teenagers four times during the week. Additionally, we want to reinstate the following: honor roll field trips, Christmas holiday gifts, and investing and nurturing the unique talents and gifts of its members. Restore is the after-school place where city kids find out who they are, what they're designed to do while mustering the courage and knowledge to move forward in their lives.





# WINTER UPDATE

You, our valued donor, are present each time a young person steps into Restore. Our youth are appreciative of the free after-school and summer program that you provide. You are the one responsible for everything that represents Restore: adult mentoring relationships, summer jobs, good and improved grades, college visits, and many field trips. Restore is thriving and impactful because you care and show your love with each prayer and every financial gift. We thank you for rising above the chaos and being determined to make a difference in the life of families that may never meet you. What faith! What service! What a sacrifice! What love! What determination! Restore will continue building and reaching out to all the students who participate in our activities. We ask for your prayers that all Restore staff and volunteers continue to be faithful and excited about the unique talents and gifts of every child and youth, regardless of the total numbers.

## Your End of the Year Gift

The year 2023 has brought an exciting time of expansion for Restore, and we look forward to 2024. Thanks to your continued leadership and commitment to the young lives and their families, so many members have made Restore their second home. Additionally, you've granted special privilege to Restore staff and volunteers who walk alongside every Restore member. In turn, Restore members are equipped with the encouragement, knowledge and skills that enables each of these city youth to maximize their potential while reaching new heights in their life and future.

Historically, January to mid-February are low-giving months because people are recovering from holiday spending. Yet, in these next few weeks if you choose, you have an important role to play. Specifically, you can help us to meet our year-end goal of \$26,000. In addition to your 2023 faithful donation, would you consider an additional \$50 to \$100 before the end of this year? Any additional funds will expand the arts and culture program at our two new sites, and ensure that current payroll is maintained as we wait for the grant funding from the City of Elizabeth. In advance, thank you for your generosity, whether it's a first-time gift, your regular donation, or an extra year-end contribution. Whatever amount you give is sincerely appreciated and will be used responsibly.

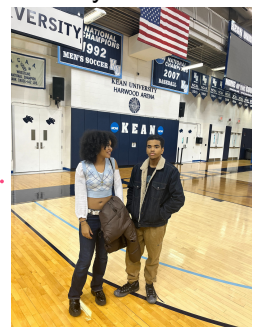
### Upcoming Event:

12/11

Christmas Celebration



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**



## CONTACT US

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Tax-deductible donations can be made by scanning the QR code and visiting our Donate page, or by mailing a check to:

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Elizabeth, New Jersey 07207

