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## Aspirations Newsletter

### April 2009

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#### News:

- Do you have **Facebook**? Search for the Aspirations Group and join to stay up to date with events and to keep in touch with everyone!
- Welcome to our newest members of Aspirations! Group 17 is off to a great start. We hope to see all of the new members at our events. Feel free to send them an email to welcome them to the group!

Josh Adams  
Nathan Arnold  
Laurence Carry Forshaw  
Jessica Grady  
Ashley Hanky  
Justin Rooney  
Steven Shaw  
Steven Stoelk  
Kareena Strait  
Dylan Bias (mentor in training)

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#### Aspirations Events:

**April Recap:** 4/1/09 6:30-8:00pm

Game Night at the Nisonger Center, room 235 McCampbell Hall and our featured speaker Sondra Williams. Sondra Williams is a woman on the autism spectrum, who lives in Columbus. She brings unique perspectives on life, which she shares through articulate text and beautiful poetry. Sondra is a wife, mother to four children with ASD, a Grandmother, a classroom aide, and a member of the Ohio Autism Task Force.

Sondra is a great advocate for individuals on the spectrum and a great person to know. Sondra will speak with both participants and parents, providing information and support for others dealing with an autism spectrum disorder. I promise you will enjoy getting to know her.

**Book Club: every Thursday 7:00-8:00pm**

Gateway Barnes and Noble (upstairs)

1598 N. High St. (on the corner of E. 11<sup>th</sup> and High). The book club is currently reading *Sabriel* by Garth Nix.

Justin Rooney of the current group of Aspirations agreed to write for us his take on *Sabriel* so far:

"Fantasy novels are tricky beasts. With so much ground already tread upon, and so many familiar tropes fresh in the minds of a fan of the genre, an author would have to have crafted quite a fresh and original tale to grab the attention of said fan when it comes time to look for the next literary fix. *Sabriel* is a book that seems to straddle the line between inventive and familiar, with an unfortunate tendency toward the familiar. *Sabriel*, the book's namesake, is an 18 year-old girl faced with a coming of age that promises to thrust into a world of responsibility she is not entirely sure she wants. She wields a considerable magical power over the realm of the dead. It's a power she is quite uncomfortable with, but a power that she will soon need to rely on, seeing as how her father, a banisher of the undead even more powerful than she is, has apparently died in his duties. She is left with her father's tools, and a desire to unravel the mystery of his apparent demise, and to redeem him from his fate if possible. She sets out into an untamed wilderness, full of threats unfamiliar to her and her formerly sheltered existence. Along the way, she comes to inherit her father's title and the regard that comes with it, and gains companions in an amusingly misanthropic entity named Mogget, bound by servitude to *Sabriel*'s bloodline and contained within the form of a talking cat. Touchstone, a brooding image from a more chivalrous time, is faced with the passing of everyone he has ever known. I am pleased with the fact that the book is set in a fantasy world more contemporary than most of the novels it shares shelf space with, and that it deals effectively with the pains of becoming an adult, as well as the exposure to the horrors of the adult world that come with all of that. The book paints a picture of a well-realized, fleshed-out world, populated with relatable characters, and, perhaps most refreshingly of all for me, not a single elf or troll in sight. That being said, I can't help but wish that so much of the plot didn't feel so familiar. I would recommend this book to fantasy fans, so long as they don't mind a bit of *déjà vu*."

Book club will be finishing *Sabriel* April 2 & will begin discussing *A Good Man Is Hard to Find* by Flannery O'Connor on April 9.

## **Upcoming Aspirations Events:**

### **- Sunday, April 5 from 2-4pm bowling at Sawmill Lanes:**

A joint event- girls and guys! \$2 per game (including show rental), please bring cash because we have to all pay together for this special rate.  
4825 SAWMILL ROAD  
COLUMBUS, OH 43235

## **Women of Aspirations:**

### **- Sunday, April 19 from 2-4pm: Earth Day Celebration**

Planting flowers and cleaning up the playground for the Nisonger Center Early Childhood Education Program. FREE! Please bring gardening gloves and a water bottle. Hillary will bring cookies and seeds, but if you would like to bring flowers to plant please do :)!! We will meet at the playground next to the Nisonger Center McCampbell Hall 1581 Dodd Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43210

## **Aspirations Guys:**

### **- Sunday April 26 OSU Men's Baseball Game vs. Northwestern.**

Meet at the front entrance at 12:50pm, the game begins at 1:05pm. The game costs \$5 or \$3 for OSU students. If we have a group of 10 or more we can get a discount and tickets will be \$2 so make sure you RSVP so we know how many will be in our group! RSVP to Alison at (614) 292-9894 or email [alisone@yatcoho.org](mailto:alisone@yatcoho.org).

## **The Next Chapter Book Club By Craig Kleiman**

Last Friday I began Facilitating The Next Chapter Book Club. The Next Chapter Book Club is a national organization that helps adults with mental retardation and developmental disabilities develop and improve literary, social, and independent living skills. The club meets every Friday morning from 11:00-Noon at the Starbucks on East Main Street in Bexley. In many NCBC groups, reading levels can range anywhere from a pre-kindergarten all the way up to an eighth grade level. The facilitators as well as the more proficient readers help the lower level readers. We begin our first book, "Black Beauty," this Friday.

I truly think that I am going to love being a facilitator for NCBC because I have always been fascinated with psychology, human development and

teaching. Words cannot describe how rewarding it is to help someone learn essential life skills such as reading or basic math. I believe being a good teacher goes beyond just the implementation of academic lessons. It involves being a positive role model and a mentor for your students and letting them know that you care and are willing to help and advocate for them. That is exactly what I plan to do as a facilitator for NCBC and for my teaching jobs down the road.

**DON'T FORGET!**

**2<sup>ND</sup> Annual BE THE PIECE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER**

**6:30 p.m. – Reception**

**7:30 Dinner followed by Presentation**

**Entertainment, Dancing, & Pick-a-Prize Raffle until 11:00 p.m.**

**Disability Resource Network Hall 3080 Westerville Road,  
Columbus**

*(All Aspirations members are welcome as guests, but you must RSVP to Lori Bias at 414-0813)*

**Have your work featured in the Aspirations Newsletter!**

**If you would like to submit your artwork, poetry, prose, fiction, nonfiction, essay, book review, event review etc. to be considered for publication in the newsletter please email it to Alison at [alisone@yatcoho.org](mailto:alisone@yatcoho.org).**