



# THE BROTHERHOOD/SISTER SOL

## E-Update Newsletter

November 2011

### Program Highlights

#### Exploring the Arts

A main goal of our organization is to develop young people's voices and creativity and to accomplish this, we inbed the arts in all of its forms. Over the years our efforts have resulted in the publication of youth writings, the creation of quarterly issues of youth created blogs/website, the honing of youth poetry, the development of youth performances, and the providing of a platform for youth to speak and be heard. The arts are an essential way of getting young people excited about learning, a method for tapping into emotions and issues that are hard to deal with, and a tool for creating strong bonds with fellow members and staff. Simply put, a well thought out arts program can create vast positive change in the lives of young people. We share our 3 arts innitiatives below.

**Bro/Sis Arts** allows youth to explore the performing arts (acting, writing, dramaturgy, producing, directing) and deepen their understanding of social justice issues. The program will also build the Bro/Sis Repertory Company. They examine the history of the arts and its impact on social movements, learn from diverse professional artists, and collaborate on the creation of original theatre pieces. We accomplish this through weekly workshops, cultural outings, and collaborations with teaching artists.



**Media Arts** exposes our youth members to the visual arts and graphic media and encourages them to be discerning media consumers. We know from experience that young people often experience media as a passive one-way exchange during which large amounts of advertisements and messages about race, class, and gender are consumed but unchallenged. At Bro/Sis we believe that the development of media literacy and critical consciousness is paramount to healthy youth development. Through Media Arts members produce the blog, Reality Check (realitycheckonline.org), while aqiring computer programming, software, graphic design, and editorial skills. In weekly meeting they deconstruct mainstream media messages toward developing literacy of the field and creating work that is reflective of their reality.

[Visit Reality Check Online](#)

**Writers Collective (WC)** allows youth the opportunity to hone their creative voice through poetry, spoken word and creative writing in a process of nurtured reflection and exchange. The group meets weekly and members participate in workshops, discussions, and outings that enable them to examine social justice issues to understand the world and their place in it. Members then use these discussions as inspiration for their writing. WC members develop performance skills and compete in slams & writing contests and organize performance shows at our brownstone. Alumni members of this program have performed throughout New York City, won multiple awards and are a highlight of our annual benefit, VOICES.

[Click here to learn more about our After School Program](#)

### Events

Our 6th annual Women's Holiday Tea will be held Saturday, December 3, 2011 at the Columbia University Faculty House. This holiday event brings together our female supporters, friends, and family to enjoy tea, a light lunch, and a tea-themed silent auction as we celebrate the accomplishments of Bro/Sis. All proceeds benefit our life changing youth development programs, which provide essential resources and services to our young people. The event highlights the work of Sister Sol and features Siste Sol alumni and members who share their experiences in our programs.

[Click here to purchase tickets to the Women's Hollday Tea](#)

Gwynne A. Wilcox hosts the 6th Annual



## Spread the Word

On October 24th, Bro/Sis consultants & former Director Circle members Dr. Susan Wilcox and Jacques Louis held a Liberating Voices/Liberating Minds (LVLM) Institute for nine mentors working with students from Imagine Me Leadership Charter School in Brooklyn. The men are members of the Simeon Guild (a men's group of the St. Paul's Community Baptist Church that co-sponsors the school) who came together to create the Adopt-A-Leader Mentoring Program for the all boys elementary school. Over one day and with BHSS guidance, they drafted a Mission Statement for their program and explored strategies for engaging the students and supporting their social development.



On October 3-4, Susan, Jacques, and Emmanuel Candelario- current Brotherhood Chapter Leader & Liberation Program Organizer, led an LVLM training in Chicago, IL. This training was due to our partnership with Open Society Institute (OSI) through their Campaign for Black Male Achievement to conduct a series of Liberating Voices/Liberating Minds Institutes ©. OSI provided funding for their grantees across the country to participate in the trainings free of charge. The training took place at the facilities of Black Star Project and 30 people from community, college and university based programs primarily working with boys and young men attended the training. Given the background of most LVLM participants, BHSS trainers focused on brotherhood and sisterhood building throughout the 2-day training.

[Click to learn more about our Liberating Voices/Liberating Minds Institute](#)

On November 4th, Executive Director Khary Lazarre-White served as a panelist at the Afro-Latin@s Now: Strategies for Visibility and Action Conference held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and CUNY Graduate Center. The focus of the panel on which Khary served was "Filing the Gaps: Youth and Education." In addition, Lyrical Circle (LC) alumni Emmanuel Candelario and Frank Lopez hosted the conferences open mike poetry session and performed at El Museo Del Barrio. Frantz Jerome, LC alumni, performed as well. All three alumni are co-founders of The Peace Poets, a collective of BHSS alumni who use the spoken word art form as a tool of education and inspiration. They facilitate workshops across New York City schools and community centers and internationally.

[Click here to learn about the Afro-Latino Forum](#)

[Click here to learn about the Peace Poets](#)

On December 1, at Riverside Church, at 6:30pm Khary Lazarre-White will serve on a panel focusing on reform of New York City Police Department (NYPD) practices, with a particular focus on NYPD's "stop and frisk initiative." Convened by the Urban Justice Center and Robert Gangi, UJC's Senior Policy Advocate, other panelists will be from such organizations as the New York Civil Liberties Union, and The Ali Forney Center. Liliانا Segura, an editor from The Nation, will moderate.

[Click here to read about the Urban Justice Center](#)

## Alumni in Focus!

Two of our alumni, Olave Sebastien and Shawn Bolden, were recently selected as among the inaugural ten Heinz Fellows. The Fellowship places Black male teachers in the Pittsburgh Public School system and is a part of the Heinz Endowments African American Male Initiative. The Fellows will work in Pittsburgh for two years and receive a full scholarship to pursue a Masters Degree in Education.

Olave Sebastien is a Lyrical Circle alumnus and graduated from Hampton University. Olave has worked as a youth worker and mentor at Bro/Sis, Harlem Center for Education, El Puente, St. Nick's Alliance and at the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing. In 2009 Olave was selected for the highly competitive One World Foundation fellowship during which he spent two months in Senegal working as a youth leader for 10,000 Girls, an international NGO focused on female empowerment via entrepreneurship. Olave joined our Lyrical Circle program in 2002.



Shawn Bolden is a Brotherhood Rites of Passage alumnus and Monroe College graduate. Shawn was a substitute teacher in the NYC Department of Education and has worked for Bro/Sis, Abyssinian Development Corporation, Freedom Academic Movement, the Police Athletic League and Thurgood Marshall Academy. An accomplished spoken word artist and performer, Shawn served as an alumni representative on the Bro/Sis Board of Directors for two years. Shawn joined our Brotherhood Rites of Passage Program in 1998.

[Click here to read an article on the Heinz Fellows](#)



Howard Brown, an alumnus of our After School Program and our International Study Program, was recently highlighted in an article at Haverford College, where he is a senior. The recently published feature focuses on Howard's music career and his drive to achieve personal success.

[Click here to read about Howard Brown](#)



**SisterSol**  
Established 1995

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